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The Calpulli in the Social Organization of the Tenochca
(El Calpulli en la Organizacion Social de los Tenochca)

by Arthur Monzon

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THE CALPULLI IN THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE TENOCHCAS

/El Calpulli en la Organizacion Social de los Tenochca/

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Arthur Monzon

Mexico, 1949

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/p. 7/ INTRODUCTION

/p. 9/ Chapter 1

THEORIES CONCERNING THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE TENOCHCAS

/2/ This work considers some aspects of the social organization of the Tenochcas, inhabitants of what was the island of Mexico-Tenochtitlan (1), as it existed about the time of the arrival of the Spanish around

1. The term used to designate the inhabitants of this place at that time has traditionally been Aztecs. Actually it is an inadequate term because it includes other groups in other places. The term, that for this reason will be used to designate them, will be Tenochcas, which can be translated as "inhabitants of Tenochtitlan."

the year 1519.

By 1877 it could be said that in relation to its importance, no subject had been written so much about as that of the Mexican aborigines and the Spanish Conquest (2). Now, seventy years later, this is

2. Morgan, L. H., 1877, p. 204.

even more the case, and there is an enormous number of works, of every kind and length, about the inhabitants of Mexico, especially those living in the central part of the Valley of Mexico. A contributing factor in creating this situation is the attraction which is exercised on the investigator, in part by the cultural richness of ancient Mexico, in part by the dissatisfaction with the way in which past authors, in accord with the ideas of their day, dealt with, presented or interpreted the unrelated and meager data at our disposal about this area in the period with which we are dealing.

The study which is here presented tries to justify itself for the same reasons. Its subject, the calpulli in the social organization of the Tenochcas, had been originally much more ambitious (3),

3. Kinship and Property as a Basis of the Social Organization of the Tenochcas.

/2/ attempting to elucidate all the characteristics of their social organization, and had to be reduced for various reasons. It was suggested to the author by the courses "Archeology of Mexico and Central America" given by Professor Alfonso Caso, "Analysis of the Sources for Mexican History" given by Professor W. Jiménez Moreno, and "Social and Economic Organization" given by Dr. Paul Kirchhoff, in which it was noted that /p. 10/ many fundamental aspects of the social organization of the inhabitants of Mexico which obtained at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards, were unknown, particularly the basis for their organization; and that there was historical material and theoretical possibilities for making a reinterpretation, even with the scant data available in this respect.

Of course the basis of the social organization of the Tenochcas is not the only unknown aspect of a community as complex as was that of Mexico Tenochtitlan. There are a great many unknown aspects, which are very different in nature, but which do not have the same relative importance for all investigators: some are fundamental for those scholars who are interested in making universal generalizations (4) such as, for example, the manner in which those laws which are

4. Tax, Sol., 1937, p. 3.

valid for all societies, obtained in the Tenochca community. In the social organization of the Tenochcas one can also look for the pattern of happenings, dates, and persons, that is, the unique and outstanding occurrences in the Tenochca historic community. And one can have an interest in finding historic laws, that is, the principles which governed the development of the social events in the Tenochca community in the evolutionary phase through which it was passing just prior to the arrival of the Spanish.

With respect to the first group of problems, the aspects common to all societies, the author holds to the position that it is not of great scientific interest to show that the same happened in the Tenochca community as has happened in all human societies. The second group of subjects—the more particular—do not make up the content of this study either, because they are already being investigated by other people and it appears to him urgent that the singular social events of our community be examined scientifically, which entails their consideration as a result of the social forces which were active in the period in which they appeared. In the third group of subjects are

121 included the problems which this study addresses: it begins with the principles which governed the social life of the Tenochca community in its historical context without discussing if this was the result of divergent, convergent or internal evolution, or of degeneration, or of acculturation, etc.

The problems treated here can be traced in the following terms:

a) To elucidate if there were clans among the inhabitants of Mexico Tenochtitlan just before the arrival of the Spanish, and if in the affirmative, what type they were.

b) To elucidate if at this time there existed any deep social stratification among them and what were its characteristics. /p. 11/

c) To elucidate if, about the time of the arrival of the Spanish, their social relations were molded by one or other of these previously mentioned factors, or by neither of them (5).

5. To elucidate the type of government—as a manifestation and proof of the existence of a determined type of society among the Tenochcas—is undoubtedly a problem which can be resolved on its own after knowing the basic social organization. It is not attempted in this study except in so far as it helps resolve the other problems.

114 Regarding these problems, the opinions of investigators—although they may not have outlined them exactly in the same terms—have been divided into two camps which make completely different affirmations and neither of which by itself explains the characteristics which we know the Tenochcas had. Some authors—among whom are those who actually initiated the discussion of this subject—like Bandelier (6) and Lehman (7), considered essentially that, in the

6. Bandelier, 1878, 1, 11.

7. Lehman, W., 1909, p. 107, 108.

period to which we refer, the Tenochcas "still" had a gentile organization, putting a great stress on the existence of the calpullis which they considered equalitarian exogamous clans. Other authors such as Moreno (8), Caso, (9), Kroeber (10), White (11), Toscano (12), etc.,

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8. Moreno, Manuel M., 1931, p. 14 ff.

9. Caso, Alfonso, 1942, p. 156; 1946, various lectures.

10. Kroeber, A. L., 1923, p. 359.

11. White, L., 1940, p. 33.

12. Toscano, S., 1946, p. 779.

are opposed to discerning such features in the Tenochca society and have tried, in special studies or in a few lines, to demonstrate the falseness of this point of view, maintaining that the Tenochcas of this period no longer had a gentile society, placing great emphasis on the existence of their social classes, their organized commerce, their wars of conquest, etc., and consider that the calpulli was simply a territorial division or whatever, but not a clan.

These two positions in a certain way complement each other, but really exclude each other in the form in which they have been presented, it not being possible simply to bring them together in order to have an idea of what was going on in the Valley of Mexico up to the time of the arrival of the Spanish—as some other authors have done, who actually sustain a third position, such as Vaillant (13),

13 Vaillant, G.C., 1941, p. 108 ff.

Thompson (14), Murdock (15), and in a certain respect, Acosta (16),

14. Thompson, J.E., 1933, pp. 105, 119.

15. Murdock, G.P., 1934, pp. 372, 373.

16. Acosta Saignes, M., 1945, p. 21.

who present /p. 12/ the Tenochca society as having, at one and the same time, exogamous clans and marked social classes both with equal or very similar importance, or with exogamous clans in transition through internal evolution to a society with social classes.

Most remarkable is that all these investigators have arrived at such different conclusions working approximately with the same facts and

114 consulting the same sources. So much so that one of them, Bandelier, the leader of those who hold that the Tenochcas had exogamous clans, during a long period held the opposite point of view (17) and only

17. Bandelier, in White, L., 1940, 1, Introduction.

after many arduous discussions with Morgan came to change his stand, contributing, nevertheless, a great number of arguments for both positions.

In order to understand this situation it is necessary to follow, at least in a general fashion, the process of the discussion which at first sight appears to revolve about the use of certain terms. The discussion was initiated by Bandelier (18), but actually it was not he who

18. From a scientific point of view there is no need to take into account the feudalistic conception of the conquerors, although we have necessarily to avail ourselves of their data.

outlines the problem of elucidating the bases of the social organization of the Tenochcas, but rather Morgan, and it is to him that we have to go in order to understand the origin and the development of all these positions. Morgan, among other things of various value, made the discovery that social forms could be ordered in an evolutionary line, and that in doing this, one could see a correlation between the characteristics of inventions and discoveries and human institutions; there appearing in the course of human history two successive plans of organization: one based on the personal relations of kinship ("societas") and the other based on territory and property (19) ("civitas").

19. Morgan, L.H., 1877, p. 54, etc.

Although even before Morgan's work there was talk of the difference between bonds originating in kinship and those originating in territorial situation (20), actually it was Morgan who gave meaning to

20. Maine, 1861, cited by Lowie, R.H., 1937.

this distinction, making evident the great difference between

communities based on kinship through common descent and communities based on territorial division and land ownership; as well as the different position on the scale of human evolution which one or other base will bring about. Morgan proposed an evolutionary scheme of all human societies including in it societies with matrilineal exogamous customs /p.13/ as a first evolutionary stage, societies with patrilineal exogamous customs as a later evolutionary stage, societies clearly based on the ownership of land and on territorial division as a stage even higher, and societies which he considered to be in transition between these steps of a unilinear evolution (21). Although Morgan

21. Morgan, L.H., 451, 452, 333, 334, etc.

was not the first person to speak of societies with exogamous customs, since they were already known from an earlier date (22), it was Morgan

22. Latham, 1859; Bachofen, 1861, cited by Engels, 1891, and by Lowie, 1937.

who was first to attempt to systematize them as special forms of social organization based on kinship through common descent, and to give an explanation of their origin and of their evolution from a society based on the systematization of sexual relationships up until the society based on ownership of land and territorial distribution appears, at the same time trying to demonstrate that there is an intimate relationship between the various aspects of culture which each evolutionary period evinced. At the same time Morgan affirmed that humanity shunned incest and that for that reason one could not expect to find groups with endogamous customs (as some authors thought (23)) which according to

23. MacLennen, 1886, cited by Engels, 1891, and by Lowie, 1937; Lubbock, 1884, pp. 93, 135 ff.; Giraud Telon, 1874, cited by Engels, 1891.

his theory had disappeared quite at the beginning of social evolution.

Morgan's well-ordered scheme with two fundamental types of human societies, one based on kinship through common descent ("societas") with matrilineal or patrilineal clans, the other based on territorial division and on the ownership of land ("civitas"), was widely accepted by many investigators since actually it introduced for the first time the

114 systematization of very extensive data whose evolutionary significance nobody had attempted to see as a whole. It was a scheme that was taken almost without modifications by some investigators, which is precisely what happened with those who studied the society of the Tenochcas, resulting that while some maintained that it was a community of the "societas" type, that is, that it was based on kinship through common descent (24), other authors maintained that it was a

24. Bandelier, 1878, p. 599 ff.; Lehmann, 1909, etc.

community of the "civitas" type, (25) that is, based on territory and

25. Moreno, M., 1931, p. 16, 82, etc.

property (26), or that it was in transition between the two extremes

26. White, L., 1940, p. 33, 35, etc.

(27), according to the emphasis which they saw in the data and which

27. Acosta Saignes, M., 1945, p. 21.

convinced them in one or the other of these two directions.

/p. 14/ In fact the discovery that social forms could be ordered in an evolutionary sense can be considered as a definite advance in the social sciences, accepted by the majority of schools although conceived in a way which differs from the typically Morganist (28). The

28. Lowie, R. H., 1946, p. 240; Schmidt, W., 1939, pp. 11, 12; Mclver, 1937, p. 485, etc.

same can be said of the existence of two fundamentally different types of societies (29). But it must be accepted that some of Morgan's

29. Kirchhoff, P., 1944, p. 1; Radin, P., 1931, p. 1, etc.

affirmations—which were made with relatively meagre data and in a first attempt to embrace all knowledge about human societies—have been, in the course of new studies, considered inexact, as surely they

114 are, and that there are new theoretical acquisitions and new discoveries which surely ought to be taken into account in order to understand the basic social organization which the Tenochcas had at the time of the arrival of the Spanish.

Perhaps among the more important modifications to Morgan's work is the acceptance that the scheme of unilinear evolution of human society—which had been rejected from the beginning by investigations in this field (30)—is certainly outmoded now (31), and we

30. Maine, 1861, loc. cit.

31. Schmidt, W., 1939, p. 11; McIver, 1937, p. 485; Lowie, R.H., 1937, p. 59; Kirchhoff, P., 1941, p. 1, etc.

should think of the possibility of evolutionary radiation, of internal evolution, acculturation, degeneration, etc., in order to establish a correct scheme (31a).

31a. Sorokin makes a good criticism of the classical evolutionary theories, in: Dinamique Socio-culturelle et Evolutionisme: in: Sociologie au XXme siècle, Paris, 1947.

Another of the important additions to Morgan's work is that of Engels who, accepting Morgan's scheme, stressed that in reality the differences between the types of communities "societas" and "civitas" were based rather upon the fact that the first had their basis in the systematization of sexual production, that is, in reproduction ("gentiles"), while the second were based in the production of objects, which is to say, economic production ("políticas") (32). This is a

32. Engels, F., 1891, pp. 5, 6.

very important addition, although this author and those that followed him in his ideas also accepted the Morganist idea that societies based on kinship could only be unilateral and exogamous, and that, in general terms, social evolution was unilinear. Some authors

114 criticized Engels' manner of viewing social evolution and his introducing phenomena of sexual relationship as the basis for one type of society; they made /p. 15/ systematicizations of the social organization of humanity considering that everything could be explained through economic production (32a). But it appears that this is a

32a. Cunow, 1926.

theoretical regression surpassed by Engels himself (33) upon dealing

33. Before Engels and other investigators of his mind accepted the systematization proposed by Morgan, Karl Marx had proposed a systematization of human societies into four types: Asiatic, Ancient, Feudal and Modern, basing his opinion principally on the characteristics of economic production (Marx, K., 1859, p. 11). From this point of view Marx studied Modern Society (the capitalistic one) thoroughly, and recently Wittfogel has done the same regarding Asiatic Society, which he prefers to call Oriental (Wittfogel, K. A., 1928).

with societies relatively or really primitive.

Another important modification to Morgan's work deals with the fact that the most primitive societies, still extant in the modern era, present a more simple organization than the clan organization, with extended families (macro-familias), frequently with monogamy without traces of promiscuity or group-marriage (34). Relative to this,

34. Krause, F., 1932, p. 182; Schmidt, W., 1922, p. 142 ff.

Morgan's assertion that the Kamilaroi and the Hawaiians (and groups like these) represent the same social situation, and the most ancient form of organization (35), could not be considered acceptable, groups

35. Lowie, R. H., 1937, p. 75.

having been encountered surely more primitive, and with great differences among these.

114 In addition the supposed evolution from matrilineal clans to patrilineal could not be proved, since appearing as distinct complexes, although related, in concrete cases it was evident that they could not be successive (36). Furthermore it was seen that some of

36. Lowie, R.H., 1937, p. 78.

the groups which Morgan considered in transition from matrilineal customs to patrilineal customs and others with matrilineal customs, exhibited in many aspects a notable superiority relative to those who had patrilineal customs (and towards which the former would be evolving); which was inexplicable in its systematic appearance, if one accepted the succession from matrilineal clans to patrilineal as a requisite step of general evolution (37).

37. Krause, R., 1932, p. 196; McIver, 1937, p. 486; Kirchhoff, P., 1944, pp. 8, 9.

With respect to the modifications to Morgan's ideas about the types of clans, there is a very complex situation. For the reasons given, the majority of the investigators connected intimately with ethnography among tribes of primitive culture abandoned Morgan's ideas almost in their entirety, and accepted explicitly only his systematization of kinship terminology. Nevertheless, they are possibly under the /p. 16/ influence of Morgan, in accepting the distinction between a type of society based on kinship through common descent and another based on ownership of land and territorial distribution. And above all it is certain that they are under the influence of Morgan in accepting, in general terms, that the only organisms possible with a base in kinship through common descent must be unilateral, an idea which is very common among anthropologists (38), although even

38. Goldenweiser, 1937, p. 304; Lowie, R. H., 1934, p. 254; Kroeber, A.L., 1923, pp. 357, 358; White, L., 1940, p. 29; etc.

before Morgan's work one spoke of endogamous groups (see footnote 23 of this chapter) which had many similarities with clans and which appear to be based on kinship but are not exogamous. Nevertheless,

114 in this respect there is a study which makes a contribution of great importance to the ideas of Morgan and which can be accepted without abandoning an evolutionary stand and accepting that the bases of social organization are sexual production and economic production in the various stages of history. This is the discovery of P. Kirchhoff that there have been no strictly endogamous groups as these authors thought (39), but that on the other hand there indeed are groups based

39. Besides the authors cited in footnote 23, Watterman (1917, p. 273) thinks of the possibility of the Tenochca calpulli's being an endogamous clan, without this signifying a very special structure; and Linton (1943, pp. 238, 239) speaks also of exogamous and endogamous clans, the latter with interest in property and privilege.

on kinship through common descent, which, contrariwise to what Morgan thought, are neither unilateral nor exogamous, but are ambilateral and have an endogamous tendency (40). The clan, accord-

40. Kirchhoff, P., 1944, p. 6, 8, ff.

ing to these ideas is essentially an organism based on kinship through common descent, and not on unilaterality and exogamy. The clan can be defined thus as: (1) a group of persons, (2) organized in a permanent form, (3) to which one belongs through real or supposed descent and exceptionally through adoption, (4) which regulates marriage relationships and—the author would add—(5) which determines other social relationships wherever present. In accord with point (3) of this definition one can classify clans into two types: unilateral, if the members of the group trace their kinship by common descent only through the father (patrilineal) or only through the mother (matrilineal); and ambilateral if the members of the group trace the closeness of their kinship to their antecedents through individuals of either sex. With point (4) of the definition of a clan, clans can be classified as exogamous, if the prohibition of contracting marriage among themselves exists for the members of the clan, and /p. 17/ non-exogamous or with an endogamous tendency if there is the tendency to contract marriages within the same clan. These latter could be called endogamous if they evinced a strict endogamy such as the exogamy of the exogamous type clans—but the presence only of an

114 endogamous tendency has made the author of this classification (Kirchhoff, P.) prefer this denomination. It has been found that the clans called unilateral in general are exogamous, and that in turn, the ambilateral clans are non-exogamous, so that the terms can be used almost interchangeably. Moreover, exogamous clans occur in fairly equalitarian societies, like that of the Iroquois, while clans with an endogamous tendency present a marked social stratification, which stems from the formative principle of a clan of this type; the proximity of each member of the clan to the common ancestor, which results in a gamut of ranks within each clan, and even within the context of the tribe where the situation is reproduced. Then again Kirchhoff gives the name of clans also to non-exogamous and ambilateral groups—although the term does not have this generalized use—for very possibly the groups which gave the name of clan to social organisms based on kinship through common descent—as also those which are called sibs or Sippe—were, paradoxically, ambilateral and had an endogamous tendency. In accord with point (5) of the definition of clan, we could say only that if the groups of relatives through common descent are of importance in a community, we should speak of clans, and if not, then of their remains, of their vestiges, etc.

Also with respect to the characteristics which social strata show there have been some modifications of importance, which do not contradict the basic position of Morgan and Engels about the existence of social evolution and about the consanguineal or economic bases of social organization. They are additions which were not taken into account upon undertaking other studies about the social organization of the Tenochcas. Principally they consist of the delimitation of three phenomena: social class, rank [estamento] and caste. In some societies with a certain social evolution, ranks [estamentos hereafter "ranks". Translator.] are present, which are social strata composed of persons of a community with a similar social and economic position who are not related to each other, but who belong to their stratum through inheritance, and because of which these societies show little interrank [interestamental] mobility (41). In other very advanced

41. Mombert, P., 1944.

societies the social strata are veritable social classes: oppositional

114 strata of a community whose social role is determined by /p. 18/ the possession of basically different, but complementary means of production, such as land, tools or simply personal working capacity (42).

42. Marx, K., 1909, p. 1034.

and in which there is great interclass mobility (43). There are other

43. Mombert, P., 1944.

121 societies which evince castes. As we lack a definition of caste in terms of kinship and economy (since they are at times considered like clans but tentatively endogamous (44), it is proposed here, also

44. Forde, D., 1934, p. 273; Kroeber, A.L., 1944.

tentatively, to put forward such a definition; a caste being (1) a subdivision of a society, (2) with a strong endogamous tendency (3) to which one belongs by birth, (4) which automatically determines the rank of all the members of the society, and (5) which determines every individual's role in the social division of labor (45).

45. This is a definition tentatively arrived at through conversations with Dr. P. Kirchhoff.

In this work it has been the author's intention only to elucidate whether the social organization of the Tenochcas was rooted in phenomena of kinship through common descent, in light of earlier theoretical attainments, in order to attempt to explain its function and its place within the undeniable social evolution of humanity. Outside of this work has remained the discussion of social relations rising directly from economic production, as are commerce (46), slavery (47), and

46. In this respect there is a most interesting work of Acosta Saignes, The Pochtecas [Los Pochteca], (1945), and his thesis on the same subject.

47. See the work of Bosch, Carbs: Prehispanic Slavery among the Aztecs [La Esclavitud Prehispánica entre los Aztecas] (1945).

121 the organization of the empire, based fundamentally on the tribute of groups not related to the dominators. These are very extensive parts of the social organization of the Tenochcas, and very important; but they can be left aside in treating our problem because they can be considered surely as forms derived from a fundamental structure. Nor is the attempt made in this work to describe all the functioning of the Tenochca society, nor to discuss all the positions which have been adopted with respect to various particular aspects of their social organization: these are so many and so intricate that the discussion would constitute many works such as the present; only a few have been dealt with, those which appeared to me relevant to the discussion of the central theme. Thus this work is limited to elucidating if there were clans among the Tenochcas and what were the characteristics of the social classes. In Part I is an exposition of the data which have permitted certain investigators to think /p. 19/ that the Tenochcas had social classes. In Part II an attempt is made to demonstrate that in Tenochca society there existed an organism based on kinship through common descent, an ambilateral clan, by nature clearly stratified: the calpulli; and that the phenomena which might lead us to think that the society of the Tenochcas had classes are explained by the existence of groups of this type.

127 The sources consulted to obtain data which would serve as the basis for my conclusions are practically the same as those utilized by Bandelier and by Moreno, M., to which are added a few more items furnished later to investigators. The sources consulted naturally are very many more than the sources used and cited, for actually there is an enormous lack of data with respect to the problems which I treat in this work. Data from other regions had to be utilized (Tlaxcalla, Texcoco, for example) in order to complement certain information, and it was necessary to utilize data from very much later periods than the one whose reconstruction is attempted in this work; but this was impossible to avoid. In order to standardize the criterion regarding the validity of information, I regarded the documents immediately after the conquest of Mexico as describing the situation with some errors: (1) The limitations of inquiry and information, stemming from the fact that neither the chroniclers nor the informants had special training; (2) the stress given certain subjects by the way the informants or the recorders saw them, according to their interests; (3) the difficulty that the Spanish had in understanding a society so different from their own in some respects and so similar in others; (4) the difficulty the informants had in analyzing their own society. The

127 majority of the data which could not be considered as a result of Spanish influence were taken as remains of situations from before the Spanish conquest. In every case the principal citerion of accuracy was the congruity presented by the data themselves; particularly in the sifting of data in works written long after the conquest or by authors who did not come to Mexico in this period (Acosta, Torquemada, Clavijero, Gomara, etc.) but who had at hand information and documents which we now lack, or who saw remains atill little modified of the ancient social organization of Tenochtitlan.

The contorted form reflected by some arguments derives principally from the necessity of taking advantage of the few facts about the subject, which are not always specific or categorized, but which refer to secondary or derived cultural traits; and which suggest a prior basic situation necessary to their appearance.

/p. 21/ THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CALPULLI

/p. 23/ Chapter 2

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

565 463 In the sources for the history of Mexico we find data which beyond doubt demonstrate the existence of social stratification among the Tenochcas and which have let a few authors think that the Tenochcas had social classes. These data are very diverse in nature and very abundant, but here only the more significant will be presented: the division between manual laborers and directors, the paying of tribute, the differentiation in the living standard, the relation between the strata and the calpullis, and the inheritance of property to a determined stratum.

With respect to the division of labor we find a great difference of activities between two types of people: those who undertook manual labor and those who undertook essentially directive tasks. We are told that the macehuales were the common people and laborers (1) and that

1. Zurita, p. 94.

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they worked at their crafts (2), that is, they were manual laborers.

2. Acosta, José de, p. 425. "crafts" [oficios] being considered a more or less specialized manual artisan activity.

On the other hand the pillis and the tecuhtlis had as occupations "to serve in war and in public office as governors and ministers of justice... squires... messengers... to oversee the sowing of seed or other things which were done in common or for their festivities and the service of the ruler" (3) and "to watch over the lands of the

3. Zurita, p. 89.

calpulli and defend them, to keep each marked in its proper fashion, and see to the boundaries between each, and where and with whose they bordered and who worked them, and who owned which and which were vacant... and who and when and to whom they were given" (4) and to see to it "that they be not entered upon" (5), and

4. Zurita, p. 90.

5. Zurita, p. 88.

they were "careful to protect the men of the calpulli and speak for them before the governors" (6); that is, that the pillis undertook tasks

6. Zurita, p. 90.

essentially directive or coordinative (7). With these data we can

7. With reference to Tlaxcalla, Muñoz Camargo tells us (p. 103) that the tecuhtlis /p. 24/ and pillis "are thought of as men of quality even when very poor who never carry out mechanical tasks or base or servile undertakings. They never allow themselves to carry a burden or dig with hoes or plows, saying that they are nobles [hidalgos] and that they will not apply themselves to these vile and base things, but rather

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are they to serve in wars and on the frontiers." This was surely what happened in Tenochtitlan although unfortunately we have no such clear affirmation for this place.

/p. 24/ assert that among the Tenochcas there was present a marked differentiation with respect to labor: there were people who undertook manual labor and people dedicated to directive activities. These latter, also appear in our data strongly related to the calpulli.

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The difference in the social division of labor which we have seen in the last paragraph had possibly as its principal manifestation the position with respect to the paying of tribute: some were tributaries and some received tribute. It is told us in this regard that "the poor macehuales worked all day for their tribute and in order to give food to them (to the lords) to eat; because in a village of a thousand people there are a chief /cacique/ and a hundred lords / principales/ among whom the village is divided into wards... and these eat and drink and loaf at the expense of the poor workers (or macehuales, as we have seen) who support it all; and this is a very old custom in all the provinces of the land" (8), (that is, also in Tenochtitlan and not through

8. López Gerónimo, 11, p. 151. Although the assertion of a confirmed pro-slavist, it is useful and synthesizes many isolated facts.

Spanish influence). From our data we conclude first, that the lords were approximately 10 percent of the population and moreover, that there was a division between people receiving tribute—those undertaking directive work—and people tributary—those who undertook manual work—, and there comes to light again the relationship between this social stratification and the division of land, only that now with respect to the paying of tribute, the lords receiving tribute were those in charge of the town wards. Everything is confirmed in other sources: we are told that the macehuales "worked a plot of land for their lord or head (of the calpulli) for his sustenance and gave him service according to the people there were in the village" (9). Another

9. Zurita, p. 142.

author tells us that the elders used to say "that the common people

565 contributed to their natural and legitimate masters in making their
463 houses and cultivating their plots... and they did the same for the
651 lords" (10). Taking into account all that has been said above it is

10. Anunciación, p. 237.

clear that the payment of tribute existed within the same Tenochca group and reflected a difference between two kinds of people, and that there existed a relationship between this stratification and the ward divisions. It also appears from our data that, besides the tribute to the lords, there was a tribute to the rulers [a los "señores"], to the chiefs [a los "caciques"], which is probably to say, to the chiefs of the whole group, not just to the lesser ward lords.

565 It is certain that as a result of the role in the division of labor and
511 of the difference between being tributary and tribute-receiving, great differences in the standard of living in the population came about in Tenochtitlan. The macehuales had "neither furniture, nor clothing other than what they wear on their persons, which is very poor, and one or two stones for grinding maize, and a few pots for cooking and a mat on which they sleep... and they eat little... the common
[651] people and the plebians are so tyrannized by their Indian lords that most of them have their rations taxed " (11). On the other hand we

11. Oviedo, III, p. 535. The weakness of the author cited vanishes by reason of its congruence with other authorities.

are told that the lords and rulers were always going to banquets and weddings (12) and that the princes slept in beds (13) and that the

12. López Gerónimo, II, p. 151.

13. Martín de Anglería, P., p. 470.

[525] rulers had and gambled with "precious stones and jewels and gold and featherwork, slaves, blankets of all sorts, and arms and trappings of war" (14). We have all seen, likewise, the diversity which the

14. Pomar, p. 27. Although the fact refers to Texcoco, it coincides with what is known in less

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categorical assertions such as that of the Codex Alcobiz (Laws which the Indians had) [Leyes que tenian los Indios].

codices show between the clothes and gear of the macehuales those of and the lords and rulers in illustrations of Sahagún, Mendoza, etc. All of these are facts which oblige us to think that there were great differences of richness and well-being within the population of Mexico-Tenochtitlan and that these differences existed between the macehuales and pillis.

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Another aspect which showed the differences between segments of the population was sexual life: "it is said that commoners have only one wife; but the lords can have concubines at their wish" (15), and

15. Mendieta, Eclesiastical History [Historia Eclestiástica], p. 297.

when they married "the noble women brought with them other maid-servants (and with all these women the men had)... much profit for they made them weave and make blankets, and perform other services of this sort" (16).

16. Motolinía, History [Historia], p. 164.

These data show us not only the well-being of the polygamous lords implicit in having a multitude of wives, but also the economic well-being derived from this polygyny, which was beyond the reach of the macehuales.

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However, it seems that this stratification also included groups of people dedicated to occupations other than agriculture since we are told that the merchants also had lords who went about with the heads of the calpullis (17), which makes us think that not all the merchants

17. Zurita, p. 143.

were /p. 26/ lords, and that therefore there obtained among them also the stratification of which we have been speaking. Complementing and clarifying the situation, we know that the merchants and the artisans, although they cultivated their land, did not give tribute by working the fields but in work of their particular occupation

565 463 (18) such as masons, carpenters, feather-workers and metal-workers

18. Zurita, p. 142.

(19). Although it is not made clear to us whether this tribute of

19. Oviedo, III, p. 535.

"merchants and artisans" was in relation to the rulers of the whole Tenochca group or only to the lords of the corresponding calpulli, it is very possible that in this tributation there occurred the same thing which happened to the workers which we have seen: they paid both. All this makes us think that the stratification which existed among the Tenochcas was not in layers of workers, artisans, merchants, and chiefs, but rather between the chiefs and the governed, be they laborers, artisans, or merchants. This conception is reinforced by our being told that the pochteca tlatoque (a term translated as the lords of the pochteca, that is, merchants) did not go on the trips of the merchants, but that they entrusted their "merchandise" to them that they sell it for them and later they divided the profit (20); which is

20. Sahagún, I., p. 351.

to say that within the group, differences of occupation were present which resulted in a stratification between people who worked as merchants and people who, because of another class of work (directive, as chiefs, as "lords") received part of the benefits obtained through "marketing." It is told of the artisans of Texcoco that the nobles also learned crafts, but only as a distraction (21). Assuredly a similar

21. Pomar, p. 38.

situation existed in Tenochtitlan and almost certainly corresponded to the division between pillis and macehuales, in groups of artisans.

565 428 It is advisable to make further clarifications with respect to the division between tributary macehuales and tribute-exacting pillis. One source tells us that although the lords had many women, they considered only one of them the most important and the children she bore [were considered] as inheritors of their position (22). Although the

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22. Pomar, p. 25. Actually Pomar gives contradictory information: "they always leave as heir to their estate the son of the legitimate wife" and "to the most virtuous, although he be the youngest... (or) of the other women." Nevertheless, paternal inheritance remains as the fact common to all.

information does not refer to Tenochtitlan, certainly it was valid also for the lords of that place, and Zurita does confirm it in part (23).

23. Zurita, p. 90.

Another author tells us that in cases of rebellion by the lords, they were removed and the rulers placed a near relative, such as a brother, in his place, but not his son (24). It resulted from this that the legal

24. Mendieta, History [Historia], p. 154.

heir of the calpulli chief was in these cases a relative of the predecessor, although not necessarily his son: possibly it can be said that the relatives of the chief of the calpulli were lords, that they could potentially become tribute-exactors like the chiefs if they ever achieved this category, and that not all did achieve it. However, the wives and children of the calpulli chief certainly had the benefit of the tribute paid to him (25).

25. Muñoz Camargo, with respect to Tlaxcalla tells us that "the family estates [mayorazgos] entailed by them (the pillis), are never divided, and they (this must refer to the macehuales) were obliged only to support all the relatives and brothers of that family" (p. 8).

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We are told that there were in the wards other persons of authority besides the chief, such as the telpochtlato (26) or director of the school

26. Torquemada, II, p. 220.

of each ward, who certainly lived from tribute. We are told on many occasions of tribute for the temples (see page 42) thus making some

565 651 priests tribute receivers. But there are still some other very important complementary data: on one hand that "painters, whom they called tlaculoca (sic: tlácuiloque), were exempted from contributions and from some services... also the singers... and the players of instruments... neither did the instructors contribute..." (27). On the other

27. Fuenleal, p. 249.

hand we know that all who contributed were called macehuales (28)

28. Fuenleal, p. 249.

and that the relatives of rulers and some lords did not contribute (29),

29. Oviedo, III, p. 535.

from which we can infer that the musicians, singers, instructors, etc. who did not contribute, were people from among the rulers and lords, and not from the macehuales; although such a conclusion is not absolutely necessary or compelling.

There are, nevertheless, within the scheme of the tributary [729] macehuales and the tribute-exacting lords some exceptions: those who distinguished themselves in war were exempted from taxation (30),

30. Fuenleal, p. 249.

which obliges us to think that they were macehuales who enjoyed a privilege which the other macehuales did not have. Certainly these macehuales were the ones who were made nobles by favor (31) and

31. Sahagún, II, p. 308.

about whom there are no data to indicate that they received tribute, that is that they were "nobles," lords by inheritance, nor could they have "tenants" [*"terrasgueros"*] (32), that is, could live from tribute,

32. Torquemada, II, p. 546.

and /p. 28/ who for that reason, like the common macehuales, personally worked their lands; their distinctive character was simply that

565 651 [681] of not contributing. On the other hand we have a counterpart to these macehuales who did not contribute: there were lords who being caught in a crime were punished by "being condemned to death" or to exile or to being sheared, or they were made macehuales (33), that is, they

33. Sahagún, II, p. 308.

were pillis from whom was taken the right to exact tribute and on whom was imposed the obligation of contributing. We saw also earlier that not all lords were exempt from contribution. We can think, nevertheless, that these cases must have been an exception, and that in general the macehuales were tributary and the pillis tribute-exacting.

We would thus have in Tenochtitlan a whole gamut of people in different situations with respect to tributation: people receiving tribute from all tribute-paying persons, people receiving tribute from the members of their calpulli, people neither tributary nor tribute-receiving, and people not tribute-receiving but tributary. According to the above data there is no doubt that there was present a marked differentiation among these levels of the population, at least. If we were to take these data only into account, of course we would have to think that the Tenochca society had classes; but if we analyze other data at our disposal, we will see the great importance which inheritance had in the belonging to each one of these levels (except that composed of the valiant in battle), which removes the class-like character from them. In the first place we are told that upon 565 852 the birth of children "they were washed by the priests and after being washed they [the priests] would place in the child's right hand a tiny sword and in the left, a little shield. The children of the common people were given the insignia of their occupation, and all this beneath some idol" (34). From this it is infered that the people were

34. Acosta, José de, p. 425.

differentiated by their rank from birth: some were born destined to serve in war and on the frontiers (those with the little shields, who were not commoners) and were not to apply themselves to base work, and others were born destined to be laborers and to have humble and vile occupations. Now this situation was hereditary since the pillis 565 were called "lords" (35) and were the sons and grandsons and

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35. Zurita, p. 91.

great-grandsons of lords (36); that is to say, that the differentiation

36. Zurita, p. 90.

which was made between these two types of people from birth was hereditary. And as we are actually told of lords from the epoch of the Tenochca migration (37), we may believe that they were very

37. Geneology and Lineage [Genealogía y Linaje], p. 248.

ancient ranks. The position of the macehuales was certainly also inseparable and socially complementary to the position of lord /p. 29/: it is mentioned also during the migration (38), and could

38. Tezozomoc, Mexicayotl, p. 147.

be considered as a mental reflection of the situation, the legend which tells that the macehuales all descend from the first macehuales, the ancient gods Oxomoco and Cipactonal (39) connected intimately

39. History of the Mexicans from their Pictures [Historia de los mexicanos por sus pinturas], p. 210.

with the tasks of cultivation of maize, proper to their rank. With respect to merchants we also have [reference to] the existence of lords since the epoch of Cuacuauhpitzahuac in Tlatelolco (40) which

40. Sahagún, III, p. 341.

would confirm their hereditary stratification. As for the artisans, there were founders of the crafts whose successors adored them as gods (41), and who certainly were the corresponding pilli forefathers.

41. Sahagún, I, p. 46. Sahagún, II, p. 387; Torquemada, II, p. 60.

565 These levels did not have an absolute castelike rigidity. Besides what we have already seen regarding the fact that some macehuales were in a special position by reason of their exploits in life and not by birth, and that there were lords who lost their privileged situation of tribute receiving, we know that it was customary for pillis and 582 macehuales (42) to intermarry, the children of which marriages must

42. Motolinía, Memorials [Memoriales], p. 123; Zumárraga, p. 66, etc.

have had a different position from those children of marriages between pillis or of pure macehuales. There must have been present a whole series of people, from the most noble to the most plebian, we could say (using the terms noble and plebian in our sense), giving rise to a real pyramid of levels within the Tenochca group. Thus we see that the differentiation of rank had a corresponding economic differentiation; but that this latter had a limitation: not all the pillis could be recipients of tribute, but only the functionaries of the tribe or of the calpulli, and on the other hand, not all the macehuales payed tribute, those valiant in war being excepted. In their recognition of this stratification Caso, Spinden (43), Toscano, Moreno, White, etc. are

43. Spinden, H.J., 1943, p. 210.

right, but only in part, since these strata were not social classes; they could be considered ranks because of the little mobility of those belonging to them, generally by birth (an affirmation which with respect to the uppermost level can be definitive); but—and this is the fundamental thing—it can be shown that the existance of these strata was hinged to that of ambilateral stratified clans, the calpullis, and that it was therefore not a fundamental structure but a derived one, as will be seen in the second part of this work.

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Chapter 3

TERRITORIAL DIVISION

631 Another of the aspects of the social organization of Tenochtitlan which has led us to think that it was not based on kinship through

631 common descent is the existence of what the Spanish called "barrios" [henceforth "wards"], or territorial divisions of Tenochtitlan. This chapter attempts to describe all the elements which were related to the calpullis in the whole of the territorial organization, and not really to make a reconstruction of a topographical type (1). If we

1. Topographically, the work of Toussalent Fernández and Gómez de Orozco on Tenochtitlan is very complete. But it does not touch upon the problem which interests us here (Plans of Mexico City: the 16th and 17th Centuries [Planos de la Ciudad de México. Siglos XVI y XVII] Mexico, 1938).

analyze the data which we find relevant to this in the sources, we see that it very amply clarifies for us the situation extant around the time of the arrival of the Spanish, and which we can synthesize in the following form: the Altepetl Tenochtitlan was formed of four Campan ("large wards"), each of these by various Calpulli ("wards"), each formed by various Chinampa (family plots).

This table results from examining the most significant data in the sources refering to the Territorial division of Tenochtitlan. We do not know what the situation was before the arrival and establishment of the Tenochcas on the island, but we are told that upon establishing themselves on Tenochtitlan the leaders split up among four wards "each one with his relatives and associates, where each party built at will" (2), according to which it appears that the members of each

2. Ramirez Codex [Códice Ramírez], p. 42.

one of the four aforesaid wards were more closely associated with each other than with the other members of the Tenochca group. Also, the Nahuatl text—which clarifies the Spanish text—which describes the same happening, gives the term /p. 32/ calpulli (Nahuatl: "large house") as corresponding to "plots" while it uses nauhcampan (Nahuatl: "four regions") to designate the four wards (3). According to this it

3. Tezozomoc, Mexicayotl, p. 37.

631 appears that upon the Tenochcas' establishing themselves on the island they divided it into four parts (campan) in each one of which only calpullis allied to each other were established.

This came about at the time of settling in Tenochtitlan. What was the situation by the time of the arrival of the Spanish? On one hand the calpullis still occupied the lands that were "divided up when they came to the land and each family or band settled in the lots which were assigned to them and their descendants" (4). That is, by

4. Zurita, p. 25.

the time of the arrival of the Spanish the calpullis still had the same distribution as when they were established. What is more, well into Colonial times, Mexico City was divided into four large wards, each one containing other smaller ones (5). Surely the large wards were

5. Torquemada, I, p. 294.

remains of the groups of allied calpullis (the campans) and the smaller wards must have been remains of the calpullis, both affected by the conquest, but whose importance must have been very strong since even then, as before, these wards (large and small) had leaders [mandones] "in common as well as in particular" (6).

6. Torquemada, I, p. 294.

Let us turn now to the matter of the divisions of the calpullis: an author tells us that what was called calpulli before the conquest, afterwards was called tlaxilacalli (7). Although this may have

7. The datum possibly is Motolinía's, but unfortunately I have lost the exact reference, and although I have tried to find the datum, I have not succeeded.

happened in a few cases, it appears that for Tenochtitlan the matter was not so simple. Above all we have the information that in the Colonial period, besides the division of Tenochtitlan in four large wards, and of these into calpullis, each calpulli "was divided into streets which they called tlaxilacallis" [sic] (8). Thus it is that

8. Torquemada, II, p. 545.

631 tlaxilacallis and calpullis were not the same, but that tlaxilacalli was at least a subdivision of the territory of the calpullis, if it is not that they were aggregates based on kinship through descent as some documents suggest which tell us of married couples founding tlaxilacallis in places near Mexico (9), and the affirmation that the

9. Cuajimalpa Codex /Códice Cuajimalpa/

tlaxilacallis of Tenochtitlan defended with great diligence the integrity of their lands (10), as if they belonged to closed groups of rela-

10. Torquemada, II, p. 545.

tives.

/p. 33/ It could be thought that about the time of the arrival of the Spanish the tlaxilacallis were families or family lots of the calpulli; but against this possibility we have forceful arguments: they are called "wards" and "streets"; besides it is certain that there happened in Mexico what happened in other nearby places, in which each calpulli was subdivided into two or three tlaxilacallis (11), a

11. Chimalpain, Ms. Silvia Rendón. 6a. Relation /Relación/, p. 231.

number of families which appears very small to form a calpulli. And in the "Maguey Paper Plan" /Plano de Papel de Maguey/ appear the "streets" mentioned by Torquemada—the tlaxilacallis—separated from one another by water and earth, and each one of them has subdivisions which certainly were the family plots. The tlaxilacallis thus appear larger than the family or the family territory, and smaller than a calpulli or the territory of the calpulli.

On the other hand, we fortunately have many data which clarify the concrete picture of the tlaxilacallis in Tenochtitlan: the Description of the Archbishopric of Mexico /Descripción del Arzobispado de México/ tells us that the tlaxilacallis were like "small wards" (12) and that in St. Pablo—corresponding to the

12. Description of the Archbishopric /Descripción del Arzobispado/, p. 278.

631 Teopan campan (13) or Teopan Xuchititlan (14)—there were twelve

13. Vetancourt, III, p. 124.

14. Chimalpain, Diary [Diario], p. 275.

tlaxilacallis and five small properties besides Iztacalco which used to be part of St. Pablo only occasionally. Examining the list of "wards" of the Ms. 13994 (15), eleven "wards" are obtained (see the

15. In Royal Decrees and Other Papers regarding the Indies [Cédulas Reales y otros papeles tocantes a las Indias].

Table of tlaxilacallis): certainly these "wards" of the said manuscript are tlaxilacallis. This explains to us much of the territorial affairs of Tenochtitlan: one of the names of the tlaxilacallis which appear in the aforesaid manuscript is the same as one from the list of wards in the table of correspondence between wards and the social division of work (Tzapotlan, that of the vendors of uxitl of St. Juan). Another of the tlaxilacalli names, Huitznahuatonco (of St. Pablo), certainly is not the Huitznahuac of the lords and fishermen mentioned by Sahagun (see p. 50), since the tlaxilacalli Tecpantitlan (which means 'place of the palace') must have been the one which corresponded to the lords of St. Juan. It well could be that the tlaxilacalli Tecpantitlan had another name, non-descriptive, and that this is one of the three which appear in the list: Yopico, which is the only one exclusively associated with the lords; another could have been that of a calpulli to which the tlaxilacalli Tecpancaltitlan belonged. Unfortunately, with the data at hand, we are unable to make other correlations between tlaxilacallis and calpullis. Nevertheless we can shed a good deal of light: there was a single tlaxilacalli in which was the women's temple (Cihuateocaltitlan), in the Moyotla campan (St. Juan). But there were four tlaxilacallis called Teocaltitlan, one in each campan which surely corresponded to the locations /p. 34/ of the temples, the Teocallis. Then again, all this causes us to catch a glimpse of a difference in the category of the tlaxilacallis within the calpullis and within all Tenochtitlan as a whole. Although the data refer to an already post-Hispanic epoch, undoubtedly the situation which they suggest has many marked aspects of the pre-Hispanic.

63/ There are other terms than campan, calpulli, and tlaxilacalli which we should clear up, and whose importance in understanding the situation of the Tenochcas is fundamental: altepetl was translated by town and huey altepetl for Provincial Capital. Huey altepetl means large altepetl and was applied to such places as Tenochtitlan with many calpullis and with political hegemony over other groups; it could well be that altepetl was applied to places without hegemony over other groups. One author tells us that altepetlalli (lands of the altepetl) and calpullalli (lands of the calpulli) were the same (16).

16. Ixtlilxóchitl, II, p. 170.

In support of this Clavigero tells us that the lands of the altepetlalli were divided in as many parts as there were wards (17), thus the re-

17. Clavigero, I, p. 355.

lationship between altepetlalli and altepetl, and between calpullalli and calpulli is explained: the altepetl was made up of calpullis, and the whole of the lands of the calpullis constituted the land of the town (18).

18. There are other terms whose definition would be very useful; but I have no information sufficient to do it: tlayacapan, which Molina translates in his dictionary as ward and as collation; calnacazco, which he translates as district [cantón]; tepepa, which he translates as city, as he does altepetl; and chinampa, which he translates as ward, although its present usage in Mexico is closer in meaning to family plot.

It appears that the discussed terms were vague in meaning under certain conditions, which allows one to believe that through a natural process of growth, theoretically at least, the family territory could come to be that of a tlaxilacalli, that of a calpulli, (and, though perhaps not, that of an altepetl); the calpulli, "large house" nevertheless remaining as the basic unit.

Thus we find the territorial organization of Tenochtitlan as we presented it at the beginning of this chapter: altepetl, campan, calpulli, tlaxilacalli, and chinampa as subdivisions, in descending

631 order, of the territory of the group. This subdivision could have been a simply territorial subdivision: in wards; but it appears more likely to have some relationship with kinship phenomena, through the mentioning of tlaxilacallis as founded by married couples and campan formed by allied calpullis. These relationships will be absolutely certain if it is demonstrated that the calpulli was a clan, and there certainly are arguments which could lead one to believe that among the Tenochcas the calpullis were clans, as will be seen in the Second Part.

/p. 35/ TABLE OF THE TLAXILACALLIS OF TENOCHTITLAN IN 1637 (1)

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103 1. There are mentioned in the list the tlaxilacallis which appear in the report of the year of 1637 of Ms. 13994, and in the notes are recorded the differences with respect to the report of the previous year—which is less complete—and some mention of various tlaxilacallis made by Chimalpain in his Diary (which information was sent me by Mr. R. H. Barlow). Naturally the names of the calpullis do not generally coincide with those of tlaxilacallis. [Further footnotes in this table are not interlineated, but appear at the end of the section. —translator.]

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The large ward of St. Juan (2) or Moyotla.	The large ward of St. Pablo or Zoquiapan (3).	The large ward of St. Sebastián or Atzacoalco.	The large ward of St. María or Cuepopan.
Tecpancaltitlan (4)			
Cihuateocaltitlan			
Teocaltitlan	Teocaltitlan	Teocaltitlan	Teocaltitlan
Tzapotla	Tlachcuitlan (11)	Tomatla (12)	Tlacolpan (15)
Macpalxochititlan	Ateponazco	Coatlan	Tezcaltzonco
Tequicaltitlan	Toltinco	Zacatlan (13)	Analpa
Huehuecalco (5)	Huitznahuatonco	Cuitlahuatonco (14)	Copolco
Atlampa (6)			Atlampa
St. Critóbal	Tozcamincan	Cotc lco	Colhuacayonco
Hueyaztacalco	Temazcaltitlan		Iztacalecan
Tlalcocomoco	Ometochtitlan		
Amanalco	Contzinco		
Petitlan (7)	Zoquipan		
Aticapan	Ocelotzontecontitlan		
Tlatilco			
Xihuitonco			
Tequixquipan (8)			
Necaltitlan			
Xollohco (9)			
Acatla			
Xacalpan (10)			

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2. The names of these "wards" were considered by Vetancourt as names of the calpullis of all of Tenochtitlan, and Bandelier and many authors followed him in his error.

3. Chimalpain called this "large ward" Teopan Xuchititlan (p. 275, Diary [Diario]).

4. Missing in 1636.

5. Also in Chimalpain, p. 13.

6. Tlapa appears in 1636, which is perhaps a mutilated entry.

7. Tepatitlan appears in 1936 [sic. 1636] which seems more correct.

8. Also in Chimalpain, p. 15.

9. Also Chimalpain, p. 219.

10. Xapalca appears in 1636.

11. Also in Chimalpain, p. 251.

12. Also in Chimalpain, p. 13, where it appears as Tonatla.

13. Missing in 1636.

14. Also in Chimalpain, p. 238.

15. Also in Chimalpain, p. 238.

/p. 37/ Chapter 4

OWNERSHIP OF LAND

423 Let us analyze another of the aspects of the social organization of the Tenochcas, which might lead one to think that it did not have its origin in kinship: viz., ownership of land. In the sources we find that for the most part it was related to the existence of the calpullis.

In the Spanish sources of the beginning of the conquest three really very different criteria are always taken, almost interchangeably, to refer to the ownership of land: one is the working of it personally; another is the receiving of tribute from the one who works it, and another is the receipt of rent. This last is not going to be discussed at length here; but with reference to all these criteria we can shed a little light: we are told that the Indians in their plans indicated three types of land: those of the calpullis, yellow; flesh-colored for those of the lords; and a bright red for those of the king's household (1). The significance which these indications had is what is going

1. Torquemada, II, p. 546.

to occupy us principally.

Let us establish first of all that the lands of Tenochtitlan had been originally occupied only by members of the same Tenochca group; but that there appear to be indications of later immigrations from other regions, as from Xochimilco (2), although generally we lack

2. Vetancourt, III, p. 124; Torquemada, II, p. 60.

complete data in this respect. We can suppose, however, that in the event of there having been immigrations, these were isolated with consent of the group in general since we are told, without particularizing, [685] that whoever pulled up and took away the landmarks and boundaries of the villages was subject to the death penalty (3);

3. Román, I, p. 285.

in the case of Tenochtitlan, through being in a very special situation of isolation, it was very unlikely that an invasion could occur.

423 We have seen already that the calpullis, since their establishment in Tenochtitlan, were concentrated and limited, and that the lands which they occupied about the time of the arrival of the Spanish, were the same which they had occupied since their /p. 38/ establishment in Tenochtitlan. This, although the original division was in part determined by the number of people present in each one of the calpullis, had certainly brought about that there was not an equal division at the time of the arrival of the Spanish. And in fact it is affirmed that not all the calpullis had the same number of people (4), which is quite understandable if the development of the calpullis

4. Zurita, p. 87.

had been more or less free. Certainly not having the same number of people, some calpullis had more land than others (5), and we even

5. Zurita, p. 87.

know of some that had "unoccupied land" (6) (fallow). This in the

6. Zurita, p. 88.

beginning may not have been of much importance, if the land was divided in accord with the people of each calpulli; but it indeed must have brought about great difficulties when some developed more than others. It appears, furthermore, that the land which the Tenochcas originally occupied was little by little increased by means of the chinampas (7), artificial land, although this is a method which

7. Clavigero, I, p. 379.

had many limitations. The result is at any rate that the lands of Tenochtitlan were divided by calpulli since their establishment in Tenochtitlan, and in spite of the differences in number of people or in amount of land, one calpulli could not take lands from another calpulli (8). This strongly suggests that the calpulli were closed

8. Torquemada, II, p. 545; Zurita, p. 88.

land-owning groups rather than simple wards.

423 Let us now see how the lands were distributed within the calpulli itself: the lands of the calpulli were occupied by the macehuales only in part and the rest they worked in order to pay their tribute (9).

9. Ixtlilxóchitl, II, p. 170.

We can complement this piece of information with another which was that all held land privately or in common in their calpulli (10).

10. Zurita, p. 104.

Thus it appears that the lands of the calpulli were divided first into land cultivated for tribute and land cultivated for the subsistence of the actual workers, and in the second place, it appears that these lands cultivated for the subsistence of the actual laborers were divided "individually" or "in common."

The lands divided "individually" were certainly the lands parcelled out and assigned to families which included brothers and nephews of the head of /p. 39/ the family (11). These parcels were

11. Gómara, II, p. 277; Cortés, 1538, p. 540.

inherited and could not be broken up (12) and the right to work them

12. Gómara, II, p. 277 and 309.

fell to the descendents of the same family (13) with the penalty of

13. Gómara II, p. 277.

death for whoever took or removed his land-marks and boundaries (14).

14. Laws Which the Indians Had /Leyes que tenían los indios/, p. 208; Ixtlilxóchitl I, p. 238; Torquemada, II, p. 386.

The lands were given in general to members of the calpulli itself (15) and there must have been differences in the size of the

15. Zurita, p. 25 and 27.

423 lots, at least according to the possibility of working them (16) and

16. Zurita, p. 88. Cortés gives us extreme measurements of lots of 100 to 2000 of "certain measurements" (1538, p. 542), and Clavigero gives us a measure of from 3 to 8 toesas, that is approximately 48 square meters.

yet there were people who did not have land in their calpulli (17),

17. Zurita, p. 89.

perhaps because they had left them unused for two years and had had them confiscated (18). The result was that, of the members of each

18. Zurita, p. 89.

calpulli, some had more land than others, and possibly everybody could work more than the plot they actually had; that is to say that there was a relative scarcity of arable land; but it appears that the families were not the owners of their lots.

We are told that some left their calpullis fleeing from excessive taxation of for other reasons (19) perhaps leaving the calpullis of

19. Cortés, 1538, p. 541.

many people and little land for calpullis with less people and land available to work. In this respect it is explained to us that whoever left their calpullis lost the rights to the lands assigned them in their calpulli (20).

20. Zurita, p. 88.

It was possible to rent the lands of one calpulli to the members of other calpullis for the public and common needs of the calpulli (21), possibly for a limited time, "for a year or two or more" (22)

21. Zurita, p. 88.

22. Zurita, p. 116.

423 and apparently not "for life," that is, the members of one calpulli did not really pass to another calpulli. (In part this does not happen either in the calpullis studied by Redfield in 1920 (23), thus suggest-

23. Redfield, 1920, p. 288.

ing that the calpulli was a property-holding group rather than a ward). In any case we must assert that in general the majority of the people must have had land in their calpullis and that possibly the leaving for other calpullis was an exception. (We could also think that among the Tenochcas the same happened as among the Maoris, where it was possible /p. 40/ for a person from one group to pass to another, in which he was adopted (24). Thus it appears that the

24. Goldenweisser, 1922, p. 382. Mishkin, N. 1937, p. 429.

calpulli was a true proprietary group, the use of the land being proof of its ownership. These were the lands pointed in yellow, their existence clearly recognized.

There was, besides the land given to the common macehuales of the calpulli of which we have just talked, a mode of distribution of the calpullis' lands which was of fundamental importance: the land 424 given to those courageous in battle [henceforth "valiants"]. These lands were given by favor for heroic deeds in war (25). But they

25. Torquemada, II, p. 545, 546; Vetancourt, I, p. 273.

were lands, and this is the fundamental thing, used for sustenance and where one could not have tenants (26); that is, they were lands

26. Torquemada, H. [sic. 1]7 p. 545. Zurita (p. 116) tells us that the tenants pay rent "To the master of these," a statement which does not appear to refer to macehuales or even to the nobles, that is to say not contradicting the former affirmation of Torquemada.

which they worked and which yielded them fruits, but which did not

#23 give them tribute as in the case of real lords (see page 27). Furthermore these lands were family parcels and not tlaxilacallis or calpullis since we are told that the members of the family inherited them and they reverted to the calpulli to which they were assigned in case there were no heir in order that the obligatory tribute be paid (27).

27. Torquemada, II, p. 546; Vetancourt, I, pp. 272, 372.

It has often been thought that these "valiants" were truly ennobled people and therefore tribute-receiving (28); but the data presented

28. Caso, Alfonso, 1946.

before, show that they were macehuales who did not pay tribute but who otherwise had lands which they worked personally like the other macehuales and unlike the lords. The problem is to find out whether they were on land of their own calpullis or onland of calpullis not their own. In the first case they would be forming a part of the general distribution of the land by calpullis; but they would differ as far as social position determined by the paying of tribute. In the second case—if the "valiants" were on lands of calpullis not their own—it is certain that they would be on land belonging to calpullis conquered in war, and thus, although they did indeed constitute a breach, we cannot suppose that it constituted a breach of importance in the distribution of the land by calpullis, since war had as a principal reason of being, the obtaining of tribute from the conquered, and they [the valiants] did not pay tribute. This surely limited the number of non-tributary "valiants." Thus we can affirm that this form of holding land was tied up in a certain degree to the existence of the calpullis and was not the fundamental one in Tenochtitlan.

/p. 41/ Let us go to another point: the pillallis. This term is translated as lands of the pillis, the lords of whom we have already spoken about. We have already seen that a portion of the lands of the calpulli was worked for tribute and another for the sustenance of the macehuales (see p. 38), and that the tribute given to the pillis was the working for them of a plot (see p. 24). Thus we are led to believe that the lands of the calpulli (calpullalli) had a portion for the sustenance of the actual pillis (pillalli) and that the rest was the land with which the macehuales sustained themselves. This would

423 be confirmed when we are told that except for the lands sold by lords to merchants, all were, or had been lands of the calpullis (29). The

29. "The lands which they possessed belonged to the town, were common, or belonged to the wards which they had parceled out, and some of the lords sold part of these lands to private individuals and those who bought them left them to their descendents. However, in the beginning they were lands of the villages which they call altepetlalli, or lands of the wards, which they called calpullalli" (Annunciation [Anunciación], p. 238).

possibility should be kept in mind, however, although it is almost impossible, that these lands were separated from the whole of the lands of their calpulli. They would be, in one or the other case, the flesh-colored lands, those of the lords.

Let us examine now the data on other lands, the so-called tecpantlalli: we find this term in the sources, which can be translated as lands of the tecpan. We have already seen that Tecpancaltitlan was one of the tlaxilacallis of Tenochtitlan (see p. 33) which leads us to believe that these lands belonged to this tlaxilacalli. 423 In the tecpantlalli lived the tecpanpouhque or tecpantlaca (30),

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30. Torquemada, II, p. 546; Ixtlilxóchitl, II, p. 170.

terms which can be respectively translated as "those counted in the tecpan" and "the people of the Tecpan," that is, a determined group of people. They were lands and peoples of the ruler (31), and

31. Torquemada, II, p. 546.

on the land there lived "people who were very esteemed and close to the house of the king, and whom the common esteemed more" (32). All this leads us to believe that these lands were of a group to

32. Torquemada, II, p. 546.

423 which "the king" (viz. the tlatoani) belonged. These lands "passed
428 from fathers to sons... and if anyone died or went off to other parts, his house and his land remained, and by order of the king or of the ruler, the others of the district put another in his place," and they could not sell them (33), and the tecpantlacas worked them personally

33. Torquemada, II, p. 546.

(34). These data indicate to us, first, that among them obtained

34. Ixtlilxóchitl, II, p. 170.

the same situation as obtained among the lands of the calpullis and tlaxilacallis: distribution in family parcels and inheritance of use, and that they had a certain unity with respect to a group which used them: its "faction" [*"parcialidad"*]. All this makes us think that the tecpantlalli were of a calpulli or of a tlaxilacalli, the calpulli or the tlaxilacalli to which the tlatoani belonged.

423 /p. 42/ We are not told only of the tecpantlalli, but also of the tecpillalli, which "were almost like what they called pillalli" (35).

35. Ixtlilxóchitl, II, p. 170.

Tecpillalli is translated as lands of the pilli or of the pillis of the tecpan, which explains to us what sort of lands they were that received this name: the lands destined for the sustenance of the pillis of the tecpan—the nobles of the calpulli of the tlatoani—, lands which possibly formed a unit with the others of the tecpan, perhaps inlike manner to the lands of other calpullis divided between macehuales and pillis.

423 There were lands and cultivated plots for the temples (36). These
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36. Román y Zamora, I, p. 120; Zurita, p. 176.

surely were of two types since on the one hand there was "a lot in each ward" (37), that is, they were certainly distributed by calpullis.

37. Ramírez Codex [*Códice Ramírez*], p. 79.

423 But on the other hand there were others which were not or appeared
794 not to be in the same condition, since in these the priests functioned
793 as mayordomos (38) and had tenants and neighbors who gave tribute

38. Clavigero, I, p. 281.

only to the temples (39). Perhaps this means that they were calpullis

39. Román, I, p. 120.

or tlaxilacallis whose lords were priests. Reinforcing this assertion is the fact that these people were differentiated from others and felt it to be an honor to be occupied in that employment (40), somewhat

40. Torquemada, II, p. 165.

similarly to what happened in the case of the tecpantlacas. What we can deduce from all the above, anyway, is that in order to speak of the lands of the Temples one takes as criterion the tribute and not the direct utilization of the land by the priests. Furthermore we can ascertain from our data that the calpulli was an organism basic to the existence of these lands in their particular distribution: each calpulli giving a part of its products, or entire calpullis dedicating themselves to giving tribute exclusively for the sustenance of the religious needs. In some cases these were towns removed from the city proper which were tributary to the temples and which alternated each half year (41). But we do not know what happened during the

41. Torquemada, II, p. 164.

half year when they did not give tribute to the temples. It may be that they continued with their calpulli organization and perhaps only gave tribute to their lords.

423 Something similar to that which occurred with the lands of the
652 temples happened with the lands for war, or yaotlallis, which had various names according to the products which they yielded, cacalomilli, milchimalli (42) and which were "for /p. 43/ food

42. Vetancourt, I, p. 372.

423 652

rations during periods of war" (43). In part they were lands distrib-

43. Torquemada, II, p. 546.

uted "in calpullis and wards according to the number of people there were in each district" (44), possibly of the city proper. These lands

44. Torquemada, II, p. 546.

were to be found also in conquered areas, since we are told that Moctezuma had in all the towns lands marked out which they sowed for him, as for the temples, and whose produce they brought to Tenochtitlan—if there was no garrison—or the garrison ate it, and if they did not sow, they fed them [the garrison] at any rate (45).

45. Oviedo, III, p. 537.

Thus they appear to be simply lands of the calpullis the tribute from which was destined for the sustenance of warriors and for the needs of war. There is however a reference which apparently contradicts the above, although it is possible that it only supplements it: we are told that these lands for war were on the boarder lines and belonged to no one, nor did anybody inherit them, they being occupied and kept up by the chief who was promoting the war (46). This

46. Anonymous. Relation [Relacion], 1554? p. 145.

appears to mean that the tribute from these lands was not inherited by a determined person but was given over to whoever was the war-chief. Indeed they were occupied by common laborers but their tribute was given to the chief of the armies for the needs of war. The reference to their being on the boarder lines may mean that they boardered on conquered land. The possibility that the characteristic of this type of land was that it was destined solely for tribute could be reinforced with the data of Ixtlilxóchitl where [one finds that] in the lands of conquered lords and subjects there were other kinds of land divisions which were called laotlalli (sic. Yaotlalli), which were gained through wars, and of these the greater part belonged to the three heads of the empire one of whom was

423 652 the war chief; and the rest was given and distributed to the lords and citizens who had aided with their persons and vassals in the conquest of such towns gained in war and this most of the time came to be a third of the conquered towns or provinces (47). According to the

47. Ixtlilxóchitl, II, p. 170.

above it appears that the criterion for characterizing this type of land ownership was the ownership of tribute since they were in reality lands of the calpullis like the rest.

423 We are told of another type of land: the tecuhtlalli (the lands of the tecuhtlis). To elucidate what this means we have three references: one, that on these lands the rulers and lords sheltered those who came fleeing from other towns and provinces (48); another, that

48. Annunciation [Anunciación], p. 238.

each Indian lord on his land /p. 44/.....

[Missing section of text. Translator].....

...when people came to it to settle from other parts and to those that were settled they gave land on which to sow, marked "that everyone might know the lands he is to sow, and most of them have their house on the inheritance which they consider their own" (49).

49. Oviedo, III, p. 535.

According to this all the lands which gave tribute to the tecuhtlis appear to be called tecuhtlalli but their organization may have been in calpullis if the arrived settlers remained together with those who were already settled. One has to think, this possibility notwithstanding, that population immigrations were not always of peoples forming calpullis nor that they organized themselves into calpullis upon becoming established. It could well be that part of these lands were those they called tlatocamilli, of which it is said they were 400 units in length and width, that they were leased, and that the rent was eaten and consumed in the house of the ruler (50), and they

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50. Ixtlilxóchitl, II, p. 170. We are also told that they were called itonal intlacatl which means something like "the sign of the birth of the people," that is, perhaps they were those of the ruler's lineage.

[The plots] were many and good, but they could not be disposed of, that is, sold (51). It is possible that the remainder of the tecuhtlallis

51. Zurita, p. 105.

were the lands of the calpullis which could be rented for the benefit of the calpulli (see p. 39). In any case we can accept that in part these lands appear to be lands of the calpullis the tribute from which was for the tecuhtli or tecuhtlis, and that in part the tlatocamilli indeed appear to have been lands possessed by a very limited group, worked by lessees, but by a group with very special and surely hereditary characteristics. Perhaps they were the lands "of the king's household," painted in flesh-color.

The forms studied up to now are communal, the produce of which is divided among those who work them and their chiefs, in different ways. We are finally going to consider a type of land ownership which is completely different from them because it appears to be private property.: We are told that some kinsmen of the rulers, [525] and some lords and merchants, had lands which they could gamble and sell (52). It would appear from this simple fact that there was

52. Oviedo, III, p. 535.

a true free commerce in land; but such was not the case. In the first place in what we have just set down we see that only some of the kinsmen of the rulers, some of the lords and some of the merchants possessed land in this way. If the lords were not at most more than ten percent of the population (see p. 24), the number of such owners must have been very small. In the second place, with respect to the merchants, we can say that if, as we have seen, they evinced a division between nobles and plebians (p. 25), the most likely thing is that the plebian merchants /p. 45/ could not be owners who disposed of their lands freely, as neither could the common macehuales nor even those ennobled through acts of valor (53).

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53. Torquemada, II, p. 545, 546. Vetancourt, I, p. 273.

This considerably limits the number of owners as well as the number of holdings of this type. Furthermore lands that were subject to any entailed estate could not be sold (54), which surely means that the

54. Torquemada, II, p. 545.

lands which could be sold were not the lands destined for the sustenance of governors of the Tenochca group, nor those destined for the sustenance of the chiefs of the calpullis, nor those set apart for the priests, or for the warriors, or for the hiers among the common members of the calpullis. Perhaps then it concerned parcels of conquered land given to valiant macehuales or to pillis but which were no longer occupied by the macehuales of calpullis, but possibly by the war dead. These plots must have been very few and certainly they did not form the base of society as it stood around the time of the arrival of the Spanish. The lands with occupants given to the valiant nobles were perhaps lands of the calpullis, as were those of the temples, etc., and really constituted only forms of ownership of tribute; on the other hand these, without occupants, indeed were lands with characteristics of private property, from which rent could be obtained if one were noble but not if one were an ennobled macehualy (55), (see p. 40). That is to say that although escaping in part from

55. Torquemada, II, p. 545, 546.

the concrete form of organization into calpullis, they remained within it by being the exclusive property of people whose rank was hereditary, the existence of these ranks being tied to the existence of the calpullis, as we have seen. It remains to find out what were the characteristics of the calpullis in order to decide beyond doubt what was the basis of this special form of the organization of land ownership.

423 x 618 We have seen how the distribution of the land was made principally by calpullis which resemble property-owning groups. In this way it appears easy to see the role of the calpulli chiefs: the unity with personality was the calpulli, but the chief was one in authority

#23 ×618 before the other calpulli members as before strangers, and the tribute which was rendered him perhaps was not so much as to a proprietor as to a functionary; although very possibly with the course of time there had come about a separation between the ideal role of chief and the real role, the chief taking advantage of his position to obtain a standard of living much superior to that of the macehuales of his own calpulli. This organization of the ownership of the land by calpullis appears to be the fundamental one, and the derived one that of the existence of lands whose tribute was destined for the sustenance of functionaries with very diverse social roles /p. 46/ (priests, warriors, etc.) who really do not seem to be proprietors of land but who have rights to tribute from the calpulli lands. Only the lands of the ennobled macehuales and those of the lords not subject to entailed estate escaped in part from this organization of property by calpullis. All this presents us with two possibilities: one is that the macehuales and the pillis held their lands in common (calpullalli) and that part of these was worked for the sustenance of the pillis, or of the priests or the noble warriors (pillalli). The other possibility is that the macehuales held their lands in common (calpullalli) and the pillis held theirs privately (pillalli, tecpillalli, tlatocamilli) but with certain restrictions of a social nature. In any case both groups, pillis and macehuales, would be owners of lands, and at any rate the lands would remain not subject to being entailed—those of certain tecuhtlis, lords, and merchants—as privately owned lands, but with so many restrictions regarding the persons who asked to possess them, that they did not remain as a principal structure, but secondary in importance. That there were other forms of ownership of the land does not upset the fundamental structure if they do not predominate: we could say that almost all the cultural phenomena obtained in all the communities; but that the important and basic ones are not the same in all the communities. The fundamental problem lies then somewhere else: the ownership of land being strongly determined by the existence of the calpullis, we have to find out what were the bases of the calpullis in order to decide whether these forms, which were the most widespread and important concerning ownership of land, were or were not determined by phenomena of kinship through common descent.

/p. 47/ Chapter 5

SOCIAL DIVISION OF LABOR

463 There is another aspect of the social organization of the Tenochcas which has seemed to indicate that it was not based on kinship through common descent but rather on economic production: the social division of labor by specialized groups similar to guilds. Analyzing the data from the sources for the history of Mexico, it is found that, in this aspect as well as the preceding, the calpulli was a fundamental element.

Whether during a given period the laborers constituted the totality of the population of Tenochtitlan is something which we still do not know. What we do know is that by the time of the arrival of the Spanish a very complex situation was present. Through a reference made during the colonial period we know that all the inhabitants, although they might have another occupation, had their lands for cultivation (1) although they might farm very little (2). This surely

1. Torquemada, II, p. 430.

2. Description of the Archbishopric [Descripción del Arzobispado], p. 278.

was even more general before the arrival of the Spanish, that is, that cultivation was an activity common to the entire population, perhaps excepting the lords; still, it was not the only activity for all people, some having other occupations. Everybody could, "work a stone, twist a rope and procure the materials to make it, and [do] the other tasks which do not require much skill" (3). Complement-

3. Zurita, p. 189.

ing this, there was a differentiation in the activities of the people to produce those things "which were to be sold" (4) and a true labor

4. Motolinía, Memorials [Memoriales], p. 236.

force market which was offered like any other merchandise (5).

5. Zurita, p. 83.

463 That is, there was a social division of labor present which we could call artisan. We know of the existence of merchants—people who specialized in the interchange of objects not produced directly by themselves. From this we can infer that there was a division of labor between laborers, artisans, and merchants in addition to that which we have already seen among /p. 48/ manual laborers and directors. Some authors have thought that these merchants constituted a social class (6) or the beginnings of a social class (7) or a

6. Moreno, M., 1931, p. 33; Toscano, S., 1946, p. 782.

7. Acosta Saignes, M., 1945, p. 21.

caste (8) or that the artisans constituted guilds (9) derived from clans

8. Thompson, J.E., 1933, p. 126.

9. Cunow, H., 1926, p. 275-278; Kohler, 1924, p. 29.

which became units of the social division of labor (10). Let us elucidate this.

10. Krickeberg, W., 1939, p. 287.

On one hand the merchants were counted in their calpullis (11),

11. Sahagún, I, p. 44.

that is, they belonged to calpullis. On the other hand, in speaking of the merchants and of the artisans, we are told that there was every class of person in the calpullis (12) and that the merchants and arti-

12. Zurita, p. 143.

sans were "of these wards and calpullis" (13), assertions from which

13. Zurita, p. 105.

463 we can infer that the merchants as well as the artisans and laborers were in the calpullis.

Furthermore, on the one hand, in general the parents educated their children to exercise the same occupations [as they, the parents] (14), and on the other is made a statement of much importance:

14. Mendocino Codex [Códice Mendocino], folio 70; Zurita, p. 110, III; Román y Zamora, II, p. 127, etc.

that upon the birth of children of the common people they placed in their hands miniatures of the instruments of their calling (see p. 28). One gathers from this that from birth it was known what a child's occupation would be when he reached adulthood; and that this occupation usually was that of his father, that is, that there was inheritance of the productive occupation. This surely also happened with the merchants, since we are told that they could only be merchants with the permission of the rulers or because they came to it through inheritance (15). We thus have, beyond doubt,

15. Zurita, p. 142.

inheritance of occupation in the social division of labor.

463 It appears that in Tenochtitlan this division of labor occurred by
X618 wards, as in Tezcoco (where those in one ward had the same occu-
795 pation, all those of the ward must have it and there must be no mix-ture of others with them (16)), since in all the provinces of Mexico

16. Torquemada, I, p. 146.

the specialization in things to sell was by "wards" (17). Moreover

17. Motolinía, Memorials [Memoriales], p. 236.

—and this is the fundamental proof—one can establish a correlation between names /p. 49/ of "wards" and occupations (see p. 50), drawing together scattered data or Torquemada's and Sahagún's which refer to this division of labor and to the specialization by

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groups in the worship of the deities. Three affirmations reinforce this correlation: one concerning the magical consecration of the people to an activity which was made before some idol (see p. 28), probably the ward idol; another was that the festivals of some months were "like" guild festivals (18), that is, of isolated groups, probably

18. Jonghe, p. 292.

of wards; and finally, that in the festivals for the idols were involved the members of a single "ward" and not those of others (19).

19. Magliabecchi, Commentaries on the Section [Comentarios a la Sección] 92.

The result of this correlation between activities, "wards" and deities is presented here in a table, and explains completely for us the character of the social division of labor in Tenochtitlan: it was by "wards" which separated tribal chiefs, pulque-makers, merchants, etc. It is a division which could be called a class one only with difficulty, since it makes no sense, for example, to speak of the class of pulque-makers since, if that were the case, they would be on an equal "class" footing with the merchants. It would appear rather to correspond to a guild division, since the class of a guild is the organization of people who do the same work (20) and that

20. Boak, A.R., and Pirenne, H., 1944.

within them obtains the separation between manual workers and directors which was present also among the Tenochcas, as we have already seen (see p. 23). However it would be very strange to speak of a guild of rulers, as we would have to do if we accepted that the division of labor by "wards," which the Tenochcas envinced, was by guilds; and it is to falsify the situation since the lords do not possess the characteristics of manual labor which are basic in a guild organization. I believe I can prove, furthermore, that these "wards" — which probably were calpullis since in general their names do not coincide with those of the tlaxilicallis — were clans, and that therefore the division of labor, like the ownership of the land, the territorial distribution of the population, and the social stratification, were the result of an organization of the Tenochcan population by

463 clans. And thus indeed it is not anachronistic to speak of clans of
X68 rulers, nor of clans of pulque-makers.
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/p. 50/ TABLE OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CALPULLI-WARDS, CALPULLI-TEMPLES, OCCUPATIONS AND DEITIES IN TENOCHTITLAN (1)

1. The names are for the most part of calpulli "wards." Nevertheless at times names of temples were taken which certainly corresponded to "wards." They appear in this case not to correspond to tlaxilacallis, except for Tzapotlan.

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Calpulli or ward	Occupation	Deities
1. Yopico 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12.	Silversmiths, 3, 4, Goldworkers 5, Xochimanques, 6, Water carriers 7, lords and kings 8, Calmecac 9, 11, 12.	Totec 2, 3, Xipe 2, 3, 4, 5, Coatlicue 6, Coatlatona 6, Chalchitlicue 7, 8, 9, Tlaloc 10, Tquiztlimayahuel 11.
2. Huitznahuac 12, 15.	lords 13, fishermen 14, Calmecac 12, 15.	Huitzilopochtli 13, 16, Opochtli 14, Huitznahuac 15, Centzonhuitznahuac 17, Tezcatlipoca 18.
3. Itepeyoc 19.	lords 19.	Huitzilopochtli 19.
4. Amantla 20, 21, 22, 23.	Tultecayotl 22, seamstresses 23, 25, dyers (female) 23, feather workers (female) 23, painters, 24.	Tizahua, Maculiocelotl, Maculitochtli, Xihui, Tlati, Xilo, Tepoztecatl 20, Coyotlinahual 21, Chicomexuchitl 24, Xochiquetzal 25.
5. Pochtlan 20, 26.	merchants 20, 26.	The markets in Amantla with 20, and Yiacatecuhtli 26.
6. Auachtlan 27.	merchants 27.	

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Calpulli or ward	Occupation	Deities
7. Atlauhco 28.	merchants 28.	
8. Acxotlan 29, 30.	merchants 29, 30, 31.	Nahui Ehecatl 30, Chiconquiahuitl, Xomocuil, Cochimetl, Yacapitzahuac, Nacxitl, Chalmecacihuatl 31.
9. Tlamatzinco 12, 32.	pulque-makers 32, 33, tavery keepers 34, Calmecac 12, 35.	Tlamatzincatl 12, 32, Izquitecatl 33, Coatlicue 35.
10. Atempan 36.	Medicasters and diviners 37.	Toci 36, Mother of the gods 37.
11. Tzonmolco 37, 39, 12.	Makers of the lord's more important vestments 38, calmecac 12, 39.	Xiuhtecuhtli 37, 38. 40, Huehueteotl 38, Ixcozauhqui 39.
12. Tzapotlan 40.	Sellers of Uxitl 40.	Tzapotlatena 40.
13.	Makers of petates 41.	Nappatecuhtli 41.
14.	Precious stone workers 42.	Chicnahuiitzcuintli, Nahualpilli, cinteotli Cihuacoatl 42.

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2. Sahagún I, p. 121, 240.

3. Torquemada, II, p. 58.

4. Torquemada, II, p. 252.

5. Sahagún, II, p. 385.

6. Torquemada, II, p. 254.

7. Sahagún I, p. 40, 116.

8. Sahagún, I, p. 22.

9. Sahagún, I, p. 84.

10. Sahagún, I, p. 84, 87.

11. Torquemada, II, p. 153.

12. Sahagún, I, p. 220. They are included also with Calmecac to Tlillancalco (Cihuacoatl), Tetlanman (Chantico) and Mexico (Tlaloc).

13. Torquemada, I, p. 193.

14. Sahagún, I, p. 39; Torquemada, II, p. 61.

15. Sahagún, I, p. 220.

16. Sahagún, I, p. 137.

17. Sahagún, I, p. 221.

18. Torquemada, II, p. 150.

19. Sahagún, I, p. 215.

20. Sahagún, I, p. 142, 215.

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21. Sahagún, II, p. 389.

22. Sahagún, II, p. 392, 389.

23. Sahagún, II, p. 392.

24. Sahagún, I, p. 112.

25. Sahagún, I, p. 112.

26. Torquemada, II, p. 272; Sahagun, I, p. 225.

27. Sahagún, II, p. 350.

28. Sahagún, II, p. 350.

29. Sahagún, III, p. 49.

30. Sahagún, I, p. 326.

31. Sahagún, I, p. 42.

32. Sahagún, I, p. 190.

33. Sahagún, I, p. 190.

34. Sahagún, I, p. 112.

35. Torquemada, II, p. 151; Sahagún, I, p. 104.

36. Sahagún, I, p. 179. Sahagún in I, p. 238 says that the cuecuextecan young men go to the ward of Atlampa during this festival.

37. Torquemada, I, p. 234.

38. Sahagún, I, p. 29.

39. Sahagún, I, p. 239.

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40. Sahagun, I, p. 20.

41. Sahagún, I, p. 46; II, p. 59.

42. Torquemada, II, p. 60; Sahagún, II, p. 387, 88.

/p. 53/ THE CALPULLI AS A CLAN

Chapter 6

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/p. 55/ PROOFS THAT THE CALPULLI WAS A CLAN

The territorial organization of Tenochtitlan, the ownership of land, the division of labor and the social stratification, and other aspects of the social organization of Tenochtitlan which were not treated in the first part of this study, such as education (1) and religion

1. See Education among the Aztecs /La Educación entre los Aztecas/, Monzón, 1946.

(2), in which the influence of the calpulli is of great importance, and

2. In the chapter referring to the division of labor I touch lightly upon these relationships between calpullis and religion (p. 49) which suggest problems which should be studied more fully.

which have themselves a determining role, present us with the fundamental problem of the social organization of the Tenochcas: Were the calpullis clans, or simply wards, or guilds, or another type of social organism? Outwardly they have elements of all the foregoing. What was their internal organization? The answer to these questions will give us for sure a correct idea as to the bases of the social organization of the Tenochcas and of its evolutionary stage. Therefore we are going to attempt to answer them. The calpulli (Nahuatl 'large house') is an organism which has been presented as a clan by some authors, or as the remains of a clan by others (see the Introduction), and certainly the calpulli was the Tenochca clan, if the Tenochcas had clans. This granted, in order to know whether the calpulli had

X618 characteristics of a clan, we have to elucidate if the individuals who belonged to a calpulli belonged to it because from birth they had ties of kinship with the other members of the calpulli, or whether on the contrary their ties originated in the fact of certain people living in the same place; that is, whether or not the bonds of kinship through common descent existed among the members of a calpulli. Actually, this process can be reduced to discussing the data encountered in the revised version of The Sources for the History of Mexico, made to elucidate this point, and which in general—I can anticipate—can be considered sufficient to demonstrate that among the Tenochcas there were groups having a type of ambilateral stratified clan—the calpullis—there being really no reasons for asserting the contrary.

/p. 56/ Let us say at the same time that there have also been valuless arguments presented to support the existence of clans among the Tenochcas. One of them is the assertion that a 16th C. author, Pedro Martyr, spoke of communal houses (3); but reading attentively,

3. Watterman, 1917, p. 296, following Morgan and Bandelier.

one finds that the mention, made in Latin, refers to the "common of the houses" or better "the generality" of houses (4) and not to their

4. Martyr, Pedro, 1945, p. 424.

communal character. In the same way, forcing the material at our disposal on these matters and simply denying the value of the information, Morgan (5), followed apparently by Bandelier, asserted that

5. Morgan, L. H., 1877, p. 203. Note.

the Tenochcan community was democratic and completely gentile, which fit well with the existence of exogamous clans. This is erroneous: if the only sources available to become acquainted with the social organization of the Tenochcas are the chroniclers, we have to find out what we can from their information and see if it is congruent. Of course we cannot trust their simple words, as Wattermann so rightly noted; but neither can we simply deny them validity as basic data.

X618 Let us commence now with the proofs of the existence of clans among the Tenochcas. Cortes tells us of "communities" (6) and of

6. Cortés, Hernán, Narrative Letter /Cartas de Relación/, I, p. 102.

"groupings" /"colaciones"/ (7) in Mexico Tenochtitlan, terms which

7. Cortés, Hernán, Narrative Letters /Cartas de Relación/, I, p. 101.

are really quite vague. Most of the time all the authors who speak of the calpullis with Spanish terms do so in the same vague form. However, we have a very clear definition of the calpulli thanks to Zurita, a Spanish writer who must certainly have had first hand information and who as far as we can ascertain, tried to transmit it faithfully in writing. He presents the calpulli to us as undoubtedly a clan: "calpulli or chinancalli which is all one, means a ward of people who know each other, or an old family which has had for a long time land with recognized boundaries which belong to that stock, ward, or family" (8).

8. Zurita, A., p. 86, 87.

In this definition there enter without any doubt elements which point to phenomena of kinship by descent (family, stock) as well as elements of territoriality (ward, land, boundaries). What we need to find out is which of these were the primeordial ones, the determining ones, whether those having to do with kinship or with territorial matters.

We are told that the calpulli is a "lineage." Lineage is in general defined as /p. 57/ descendence or line from some family (9) and has

9. Barcia, Roque, Dictionary /Diccionario/.

in no way a fundamentally different meaning. According to this the calpulli had its basis in descent, "or—which comes to the same thing——"ascent," a basis in kinship through "ascent."

X618 "Cepa," another of the terms which Zurita also uses to define the calpulli, literally means "the part of the trunk of any tree or plant which is undergrounf and joined to the roots" and metaphorically is taken as "the trunk or origin of any family or lineage" (10). Why

10. Barcia, Roque, Dictionary /Diccionario/.

would our chronicler put emphasis on something which did not exist, if he knew nothing of the theory of the formative principles of clans? Here undoubtedly he again makes a strong point of kinship by descent of the calpulli members. There is no reason to deny that the origin of the calpulli members was of prime importance for the existence of the calpulli as it was for every clan.

In what we have analyzed up to now it is clear that the descent, the origin of the calpulli members is the same for all, common to all, since this is the meaning of "eepa" and of lineage. But Zurita also uses the term "ancient kinship," applying it to the calpulli. This indicates to us that the common origin of the members of the calpulli is distant through descent, precisely as that which unites the members of any clan (and not that of a family, as might be argued). Francisco Hernández uses repeatedly terms which suggest—corroborating the above data—the existence of groups with kinship through common descent: "consanguineals" (11), "blood relatives" (12), etc.,

11. Hernández, Francisco, p. 18, 28, 29, 30, 31, etc.

12. Hernández, Francisco, p. 30.

which only can refer to groups of a clan type.

But as we have already said, in this definition which we have under scrutiny three concepts appear which are not connected with phenomena of kinship: ward, land and boundaries. This causes us to suspect the importance of territory as a formative basis of the calpulli. But it is easy to see that the use which is made of these terms reinforces rather than weakens the prime concept of kinship as the basis of the calpulli: we are told that the lands and the boundaries are the calpulli's, the "cepa's" or the lineage's, and we are not told that these same are the calpulli. According to this the personal part is prior to the territorial part in the calpulli. "It is known that for a

X 618 long time each calpulli has occupied certain lands the boundaries of which were set"... this is surely what the author wished to tell us in the phrase which we /p. 58/ are discussing when he uses terms indicating territory.

But there is another term, ward /barrio/, which appears in the definition which we are discussing and which is very commonly used as a synonym of calpulli, or of "cepa" or lineage. In one of the cases where Zurita uses it he adds to it that it is "of known people" and not just any ward. This can be explained because our chronicler himself noted that the calpulli was not merely a ward and that to use the term without qualification would lead to confusion. Only in this way can his emphasis on the personal aspect, "gentile"—of people—of the term ward, used in place of calpulli, be accounted for.

But it is common—as Zurita does on other occasions—from the first writers about Mexico (13) to use the term ward as a synonym for

13. Cortés, Hernan, Letter to the Advisory Council of the Indies /Carta al Consejo de Indias/, p. 540.

calpulli. Ward /Barrio/ in Spanish and without qualifications means nothing more than "a territorial division of a town" (14). But some

14. Barcia, Roque. Dictionary /Diccionario/.

Spanish chroniclers among those who used the term ward as a synonym for calpulli in order to give us an idea of what a "ward" was in Mexico, define it in a different way, surely because they were aware that its meaning applied to ancient Mexico, was not the same as when used to refer to the wards of their own land. "The ward," they tell us, "consists of families and of a few houses because the family people and those living close to home multiplied in children and children-in-law and grandchildren and nephews and nieces, so that it was not possible to live without much confusion, because of which the families split up into private houses, each family member knowing just where he belonged" (15). This definition of "ward" has, as

15. Torquemada, II, p. 812.

a characteristic of much importance for our subject, the relationship

X618 between persons united through a kinship recognized by its members, and is the meaning which applied to the Tenochca "ward"; in no way does the territorial reference in the general definition appear as fundamental. It is a definition which approaches closer the concept of a group of persons in a clan, than to the territorial concept of a true ward. Possibly the word ward was used by the chroniclers—they being Spanish—simply as one of the partial equivalents to the concept of calpulli, because they did not have a complete equivalent, such as clan, based on personal relationships of kinship through common descent.

There are other affirmations which make completely clear for us the relative value of kinship through descent and of territoriality in the calpulli: "it was not and is not permitted (before and while the chronicler wrote in 1585) that those from one calpulli work the land of another calpulli, so as to avoid /p. 59/ their mixing with one another and so break away from the family" (16). The prohibition

16. Zurita, p. 87, 88.

that is here set down, for members of one calpulli to work the lands of another calpulli, would not make sense if the calpulli had territorial location as a basis of its organization, if the calpulli were simply a territorial division. Even in the case that there were impediments to work the land of another proprietor, the "to avoid their mixing with one another and so break away from the family" would not have been put forward as the principal reason for the prohibition against the members of one calpulli working the lands of another calpulli, which rises as an insurmountable obstacle for making out the calpulli an organization simply rooted in location or in territorial property; since were it thus an individual could change calpullis by merely changing his geographic position. Surely we have something prior—in each case—to location and to the territorial division in the calpulli which is what determines them; as happens with localized clans.

The important thing in the assertions discussed until now is that they refer to the period when the Spanish were already dominating the Mexican territory. It was not a situation which had ceased to exist before the conquest as some authors have pretended, but was alive, although moribund because of European influence. And if it was still alive at that time it must have been much more so before

X618 the arrival of the conquerors when the new modifying influence had still not made itself felt, an influence which was not and could not have been a reenforcement of Indian institutions, and particularly not those based in kinship by common descent (17).

17. Legally the disappearance of the inheritance of political power occurred around 1555 (Chávez Orozco, 1943, p. 5, 6).

The use of the term town [pueblo] as an equivalent of calpulli is frequent (see p. 34). It was also frequent to use the term town [pueblo] as an equivalent of exogamous clan (see p. 62). It could well be then that the term town [pueblo], used as the equivalent of calpulli simply had the meaning of settlement under certain conditions, let us say isolated and constituted by a single calpulli; what in other conditions would be a ward; established on the lands of a settlement occupied also by several other calpullis (see chapter 3). One could use as an argument in favor of the calpulli's being a clan, that considering it as such, these contradictions in the translation of the term, which are otherwise insurmountable, disappear.

We can also use as another argument the comparisons made by the chroniclers—who knew the calpulli—between this [the calpulli] and other organisms of /p. 60/ which they had written references: the 36 Roman "tribes" (18) which certainly were clans (19). These

18. Vetancourt, I, p. 223.

19. The proofs of Morgan in Chp. XI of the third part of Ancient Society [La Sociedad Antigua] are very convincing.

writers by means of these comparisons tried to give us an idea of what a calpulli was: it was a "tribe" of this sort, a clan, except that it was called calpulli.

Also in the sources are found two other terms which surely are comparable to calpulli: kindred [parentela] (20) and faction

20. Muñoz Camargo, p. 148, 149.

X618 [parcialidad] (21). In both cases the emphasis of the concept is on

21. Torquemada, II, p. 412.

the personal relationship: in the first clearly on the relationship of kinship. However, we cannot assert that these terms always had the meaning of clan. The same can be said of the terms used by Cortés: "communities" and "groupings" ["colaciones"].

I believe that all the above proves with sufficient clarity that the calpulli was a clan, which had as its very basis the relationship of kinship through descent of its members. We have already seen, furthermore, that it had a fundamental importance and that it molded the greater part of the social relations of the Tenochcas' life. Thus it cannot be denied that it was a clan, that this was functioning and was not the vestige of a clan or something else. This verifies the fundamental thesis of Morgan and Bandelier (and corroborates Olson's assumption (22)) that among the Tenochcas there were organisms

22. Olson, Ronald L., 1933, p. 369.

based on kinship through common descent. The "gentile" base of the calpulli, contradicting the idea that it was merely territorial—a ward—was also verified by Redfield's investigations in Tepoztlán in 1920 where the remains of the ancient clans which still bare the name calpulli are to be found; there are members in some of these calpulli which live in others, but who are recognized as belonging to the original calpulli, located in a different place (23). This only

23. Redfield, R., 1920, p. 288.

can be explained as being the result of an ancient organization based on kinship through common descent, and cannot be explained at all if we assume that its base is location or territorial property. It only remains to discover what type the calpulli-clan was in order to clarify the whole picture.

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Chapter 7

INDICATIONS OF THE CALPULLI'S BEING AMBILATERAL AND WITH AN ENDOGAMOUS TENDENCY

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To accept that the Tenochcas had clans is simply to accept a historical truth. But this truth creates a great number of problems for the investigator: What type of clans were these calpullis; how did they function; up to what point did their existence have social importance; how is the complexity and the cultural richness of the inhabitants of Mexico-Tenochtitlan to be explained if they were still tied through the bases of their organization to very primitive communities? Some of these questions are answered in the course of this work; others, not. Among those the resolution of which will be attempted is the investigation of what type of a clan the calpulli was.

It must be said of many of the very advanced societies which have been considered as being on a very high level of culture—such as the Greeks, the Incas, the Mayas, for example—that we know that they entered history as groups with clans. Nevertheless we still have standing almost in its entirety the problem of knowing what type were the clans they had, in accord with the new theoretical possibilities about this point.

The Tenochcas entered history with clans. Exogamous, as some authors say, remaining on a comparable level with the Iroquois? Ambilateral and non-exogamous, remaining on a level comparable to the Incas? We are obliged to elucidate this for only thus can the peoples of central Mexico be placed in their true historical position. Indeed Watterman in part sees this when he tells us that it is not even known whether the calpulli is an exogamous or an endogamous clan (1), except that for him this distinction does not imply a basic

1. Watterman, 1917, p. 273.

difference in structure as Kirchhoff's distiction does imply.

In general it is easier to find data on what a community has rather than to find out about what it lacks. But it is not always so: upon

X 618 /p. 62/ investigating the existence of clans in communities which now cannot be studied directly, such as the Tenochcas, one finds that the writers are not very explicit in that regard and only offer a few isolated data. From among the latter we are going to analyze the data which refer, first, to the possibility of their having had patrilineal or matrilineal exogamous clans, and then, to the possibility that the calpullis were ambilateral with an endogamous tendency.

There is room to believe that a case can be made in favor of the calpulli's being a patrilineal clan in the very widespread custom in central Mexico of thr woman going to live in the house of her husband after her marriage, (a custom technically designated as "patrilocal") (2). But in this respect one must note that this custom of one of the

2. Román y Zamora, II, p. 90; Motolinía, Memorials [Memoriales], p. 260; Zurita, p. 69; Sahagun, I, p. 118.

couple going to live in the house of the other tells us nothing about the characteristics of the reckoning of kinship through common descent of either of the two, let alone of both. Ethnic groups are known with patrilocal customs and patrilineal clans, or with patrilocal customs and matrilineal clans, or with patrilocal customs and ambilateral clans, and with patrilocal customs without clans. And the same happens with matrilocal customs: the reckoning of kinship through common descent and the location of the house of the married pair are independent traits and by no means is the fact that there were patrilocal customs an argument in favor of there having been some special type of clan.

Furthermore there is in the sources an absolutely categorical denial that there were exogamous patrilineal clans among the Tenochcas: "the Indians of Vera Paz... habitually married outside of their own tribe or town... (and) they did not have as relatives the kin of their mother, for these were in another town... (and) the reckoning of kinship was only through the men... (and) the Mexicans and the Texcocans never made marriages along the lines of some of the nations mentioned (3)." This means in our terminology that the Indians of Vera Paz

3. Torquemada, II, p. 418.

had exagamous patrilineal clans and that the Mexicans (Tenochcas)

X618 and the Texcocans did not have them. The clarity of the report is such that it needs no other comments.

On trying to see whether there are arguments in favor or against the calpulli's being a matrilineal clan we find that there are no such categorical affirmations as we have just finished discussing. Of course this was to be expected if the calpullis were not matrilineal clans. Why should the chroniclers always mention absent traits? /p. 53/ Nevertheless we can make various considerations about the possible existence of matrilineal clans, which almost have the force of arguments. In the first place, in the event of the kinship of calpulli members having been reckoned by the maternal line, the chroniclers would have said so with even more clarity than that which they used to explain the existence of patilinear clans in Vera Paz. It is possible that they might not have mentioned patrilineal descent in the event of this being the manner of reckoning kinship of the calpulli members; but certainly they would not have failed to mention matrilineal descent which, precisely because of its strangeness to Spanish eyes, would have aided them greatly in discovering its basic principle. It is our opinion that the above is also an argument of great weight for believing that the calpulli was not a matrilineal exogamous clan, although undoubtedly it is of less weight than the categorical affirmations of the croniclers themselves.

Furthermore and as a final argument against the calpullis having been exogamous clans, we have the many probabilities that they were ambilateral. We have already seen that it is affirmed that the members of one calpulli should not work the lands of another calpulli for fear that it might result in a mingling or a breaking away from the family (see p. 59) (4). What possibilities are there for inter-

4. We have already seen that this rule was not so strict and that the members of one calpulli indeed could work the lands of another calpulli; but with certain limitations, such as [being] warriors, and in such a manner that clan unity was not strained.

preting this? One is that the prohibition referred to the fact that the men of one calpulli ought not to mingle with the women of another calpulli, and surely this is what Zurita meant, in which case we would have a plain confirmation of the endogamous tendencies of the calpulli.

X618 But we have to think about another possibility for interpreting the assertion: that it was the mingling of the men of different calpullis which was not permitted. In such a case the datum would tell us nothing about our problem, which refers to the relationship between men and women in relation to kinship by common descent.

Zurita's assertion presents a third possibility: that it [the prohibition] had at its root the keeping of the men of each calpulli as a unit of work. In this case also nothing would be said about our problem. Nevertheless, in this case, as in the last, the assertion lacks a true meaning, and does not appear to be what the writer we are talking about had in mind.

Indirectly, the above notwithstanding, the assertion which is obtained in making the second interpretation to the Zurita quote, that there was not to be /p. 64/ mixing of men of different calpullis, can also lead us to think that the calpulli members had no exogamous customs if we complement it with another datum, from Sahagun: "They said that the girls who ate standing up would not marry in their own towns but in distant towns and because of this mothers would forbid their daughters to eat standing up" (5). The datum is very un-

5. Sahagún, II, p. 32; also Jonghe, p. 375.

certain, but having seen that the chroniclers at times identified clans with towns [pueblos] (p. 62) and that in other cases calpullis were identified with towns (p. 34) it indeed has the semblance of an indication that it dealt with the fact that the women were not to leave to marry outside their calpulli. Complementing this datum with the earlier one that the men did not leave the lands of their calpulli, we are confronted with the possibility that neither the men nor the women left their calpullis to marry: they preferred to do so with members of their own clan.

Let us go on to another argument. On one hand various sources make the assertion that the relatives of the future husband were the ones who brought the bride to the house of the groom for the realization of the marriage (6). On the other hand, illustrating this event,

6. Sahagún, I, p. 18; Motolinia, Memorials [Memoriales], p. 260; Torquemada, II, p. 412.

we have in the Mendocino Codex [Códice Mendocino] (7) a drawing

7. Mendocino Codex [Códice Mendocino], Folio 61.

Y 618 whose caption says "an Amanteca who carries on her back another Amanteca in order that she marry." Outside of Tenochtitlan, there were several places which were called Amantla (from where the Amantecas come); but also in Tenochtitlan there was a ward with this name from which place the persons in the illustration could have been, since the source refers to that general zone. According to this, the person who carried the bride on her back, who was one of the relatives of the husband, as an Amanteca and therefore so also as he: it was a marriage between calpulli relatives, that is, through common descent, and refers, then, to an endogamous marriage. Then again we have also more possibilities to discuss which tell us nothing at out the identity of the husband's calpulli. One is that, although it may be an Amanteca (the one who carried the other on her back) related to the groom, it may well be that this kin-bond was not through common descent but simply by affinity ("by marriage") in which case the groom could well be of a different non-Amanteca calpulli. Moreover there is a quote which tells us that those who carried the bride on their backs were her relatives (8). If we take

8. Román y Zamora, II, p. 90.

this assertion together with the previously mentioned illustration of the Mendocino Codex [Códice Mendocino] we know nothing about the identity of the groom's calpulli.

/p. 65/ DIAGRAM OF TENOCHCA MARRIAGES
582 BETWEEN PARALLEL RELATIVES

[See Diagram, p. 71a.]

(a) Ixtlixóchitl [sic. Ixtlilxóchitl], I, p. 277.

(b) Genealogy and Lineage [Genealogía y Linaje], p. 253.

(c) León M. Adrián F., 1943.

(d) León M. Adrián F., 1943.

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(e) León M. Adrián F., 1943.

(f) León M. Adrián F., 1943.

/p. 67/ It would not be an argument either for or against exogamy or non-exogamy of the calpulli.

But really we can merge both references, the one which stated that the persons carrying the bride ere her relatives and the one which stated that they were the groom's relatives. The result is that they were all relatives: she, those who carried her, and the groom. This interpretation has the advantage of erasing the apparent contradiction between the affirmations and of making them congruent. By joining the two quotes with the illustration from the Mendocino Codex [Códice Mendocino], which speaks of Amantecas, we find that the relationship of the affianced pair is not a family one, but of the calpulli, that is, through common descent: the calpulli was not exogamous.

There are also references which oblige us to think that there was no exogamy in the calpullis: according to a late source, they avoided marriages with mother or daughter "and sometimes with the sister," but they paid no heed to other degrees of kinship (9). This is clearly

9. Hernandez, Francisco, p. 32, 33.

to express that there was no exogamy, and even that there was a strong endogamous tendency.

So far we have analyzed affirmations which refer to the population in general. Let us see now the conclusions which can be obtained from the geneologies that exist of the Tenochca rulers. Although they only refer to a part of the population, as we know that it is mentioned that among them there existed a strong tendency to marry people of distant places, in the event of indicating the absence of exogamy they increase the general value of our clues. We find as an argument of the first importance endogamy which points to the occurrence of marriage between parallel relatives, either on the father's or mother's side (see the Table). The data on marriage in general is very abundant; but of those that interest us six have been found. These as a whole are impossible in groups with exogamous clans and are only possible in groups with an endogamous tendency. Cases 'b', 'c', 'd', 'e', and 'f' could have come about only—in the event of the calpulli's

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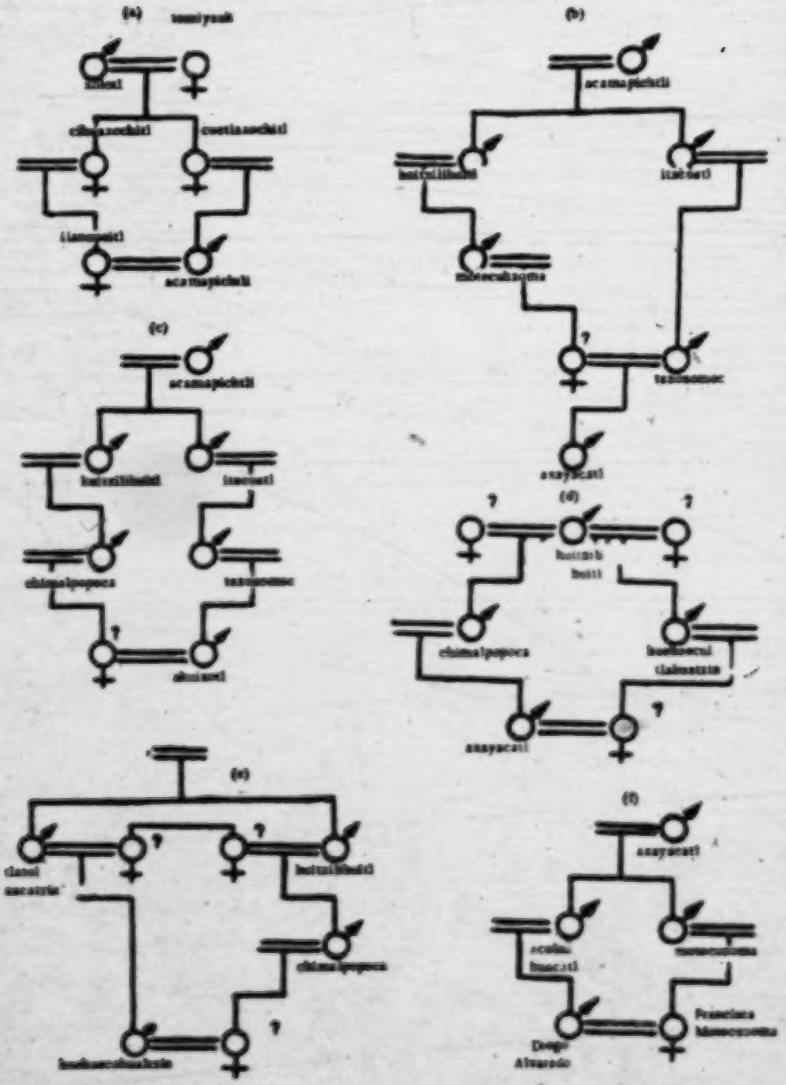
DIAGRAM OF TENOCHCA MARRIAGES BETWEEN PARALLEL RELATIVES



(a) Ixtlilxochitl [Sec. Ixtlilxochitl], I, p. 377.
(b) Genealogy and Lineage [Genealogía y Linaje], p. 388.
(c) León M. Adrián F. 1948.
(d) León M. Adrián F. 1948.
(e) León M. Adrián F. 1948.
(f) León M. Adrián F. 1948.

X 618 582 being an exogamous clan—if the calpulli were matrilineal since had it been patrilineal the marriage would have been between relatives, which is contrary to the very principles of the exogamous clan. Case 'a' only could have occured—had the calpulli been an exogamous clan—in a patrilineal clan since otherwise it would have been between clan relatives. All the marriages could have been realized only in the event that the calpulli did not have exogamous rules in any line; that is, that it had an endogamous tendency.

X 618 582 565 The contradiction between the endogamous tendency of the calpullis and the undoubted custom which the governing group had of /p. 68/ making their marriages between people of distant towns is only apparent; on one hand it can be thought that many of the members of the governing group of central Mexico were relatives through common descent and married one another for this reason (this would be reinforced by a fe exceptions such as Tlaxcalla, with [whose people] marriage was never joined). On the other hand the situation can be viewed thus: the members of the governing group did not follow strictly endogamous rules as did the others of the community, but simply had the tendency to seek in every concrete case the improvement of their lineage (which, moreover, is a trait of ambilateral clans). In general these two explanations do not excluse one another, and in fact, we find that among the Tenochcas there were calpullis which extended over more than one town and that members of different calpullis married (10). The first is suggested by the repeated

10. Referring to what happens in present calpulliwards, which appear still to have something of the reckoning of kinship through common descent as their basis, Redfield tells us that the majority of people live in the ward where their ancestors lived for generations and that generally the belonging to a ward is by inheritance (1928, p. 287), and then he informs us that he did not find evidence that the belonging to a given ward affected the choice of a wife. There appears to me to be a contradiction in this, since if the belonging to a calpulli is hereditary and if the calpullis are localized, the only way in which they might remain localized would be by the joining in marriage of people of the same ward. Very probably it happens thus, there being also a patrilocal custom within

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the same ward; although some marriages may occur between persons of different wards, perhaps still according to special circumstances. The considering of the calpulli as a clan with endogamous tendencies, which is even now found as a vestige in Tepoztlán, removes these contradictions, which can also be taken as an argument in favor of the new position which is here presented with respect to the calpulli.

names of some isolated towns which seem to have been calpullis (like Pochtlan, Amantla, etc.) and the second is suggested by the affirmations of marriages between different lords (see p. 72).

X 618 611 We have, finally, as an indication of the existence of this type of clan, an argument in favor of the fact that among the Tenochcas the reckoning of kinship was ambilateral. This refers also to the members of the population's governing group; but the fact that they also had their calpulli and for the reasons presented in the paragraph concerning their habit of endogamy, largely invalidates the objections which could be made in this respect. In a large number of cases, in the genealogies of the Mexico-Tenochtitlan rulers both lines, that of the father and that of the mother, are taken to fix the inheritance of each person: this is clearly an ambilateral characteristic. Of course it can be taken to refer to the reckoning of kinship within the family, which is always ambilateral, and not to the reckoning of kinship through common descent, of the clan, which could be unilateral of ambilateral. But in part this objection is done away with /p. 69/ when we see that in the sources from the same period, but referring to other groups than the Tenochcan, connections are made always through persons of male sex as if they were unilateral (11), and only

11. Espejo, Antonieta and Monzon, 1945, p. 48.

in those [sources] dealing with the Tenochcas (and others who do not interest us now) are connections made through both sexes. According to this, we have the right to think that the reckoning of kinship common descent was made ambilaterally among the Tenochcas (12).

12. Redfield tells us, speaking of the calpullis, which are now wards of Tepoztlán, that they tend to include

X 618 groups of uninterrupted family lines which trace their descent through the father's line. (Redfield, R., 611 1928, p. 294). This would not give a unilateral reckoning of kinship if marriages obtained within the same ward, since they would be impossible in patrilineal (or matrilineal) exogamous groups. It can be said that it is more common to follow the father's line in the reckoning of descent, and nothing more.

X 618 The certainty of the calpulli's being a clan, joined with: the proofs that they did not have exogamous customs with patrilineal reckoning of kinship through common descent; the slight possibility of their having had matrilineal [customs]; the indications that they had ambilateral reckoning of kinship through common descent; and that they had a tendency to endogamy; these, all together, are arguments for asserting with confidence that the calpullis were clans, ambilateral and with an endogamous tendency, and there is nothing—at least according to the documents which we now have at our disposal—to cause us to think that they were not clans, or that they were exogamous and unilateral.

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Chapter 8

DIFFERENTIAL INHERITANCE OF RANK AND THE CALPULLIS

X 618 We still need to find out what was the relation between the clans 565 and the social strata, which undoubtedly occurred among the Tenochcas. We have seen how the calpulli presented ambilateral clan characteristics (kinship through common descent, ambilateral reckoning of this kinship, and a tendency towards endogamy). Let us now see how another of the characteristics of an ambilateral clan also occurred in the calpulli, a characteristic which has brought about its being called "pyramidal" (1): the internal inequality which con-

1. Kirchhoff, P., 1944, p. 11.

trasts with the generally very equalitarian character of exogamous clans. This is of much importance because the principal thesis of one

X 618 565 of the groups which has studied Tenochcan society is that, as clans were present—which for them were only unilateral and exogamous (see p. 16)—they must necessarily be equalitarian (2). Contrariwise

2. Bandelier, 1877, p. 589; Morgan, 1877, p. 205, etc.

to this it can be demonstrated that there was in the calpulli a great internal differentiation of its members, and that it was not in any way democratic and equalitarian but rather highly aristocratic.

The proofs for making this affirmation are based on various declarations of people who saw how the calpulli functioned shortly after the conquest or who had at hand documents and informants which we today lack. In the first place we know that "the commoners of these wards or calpullec [sic] always have a chief and never wish to be without one, and he must be one of themselves and not from another calpulli, nor a foreigner because they will not allow of it" (3). This

3. Zurita, p. 89.

means for us that the members of the Tenochcan clans always had a chief, who had to be a member of his own calpulli.

This difference between chiefs and the governed people is, of course, always present among the members of all the clans; but the important thing is that this position of head of the calpulli was for life and was hereditary, since it is affirmed that upon the death of the head of the calpulli "they elected another, the most honored, learned and able in his way, and old; and if any son of the defunct is left, they elect him, and they always /p. 72/ choose a relative of the deceased if there be one suitable for the position" (4). In other

4. Zurita, p. 90.

words a chief was elected when the last one died, and preferably, according to this declaration, from his [the predecessor's] family. Although according to the above it appears to have been nothing more than a preference for naming the chief of the calpulli from among the members of the dead chief's family, we find other affirmations which make us see that the belonging to it was not simply a preference but a requisite, since the new chief had to be a lord

9:Monzon--76 E-4 (no date) 1949 NU7 Aztec NU7

X 618 (5), that is, must have had a rank prior to the fulfullment of his post.
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5. Zurita, p. 89, 90.

Very well, in what did this rank consist? Certainly in having a determined inheritance as we have already seen when speaking of social stratification (see p. 26, 27) and as can be gathered from the affirmation that the heads or major relatives of the calpullis could trace their families back to very ancient times (6), which implies that they

6. Zurita, p. 86.

had ancestors who were very similar to themselves, possibly also lords as a consequence. Furthermore, during the migration the calpullis came guided by captains (7) and among them came nobody of much

7. Gómara, II, p. 265; Motolinía, Memorials [Memoriales], p. 5.

account save only some lords (8). With this, together with the as-

8. Genealogy and Lineage, [Genealogía y Linaje], p. 248.

sertion that the relatives of the dead chief were preferred, who was himself a lord, and with the certainty that the fact of being a lord was a rank transmitted by inheritance, we are led to believe that the inheritance of clan chieftainship extended—at least through a line of ancestors—back to a very early period. The principal chiefs of the calpullis were members of the families descended from nobles of his own calpulli. That is, they were strongly aristocratic.

But we have to take into account that the calpulli was ambilateral and that inheritance was determined through both lines. What happened then with the inheritance of lords in the maternal line? On one hand we are told that the daughters of lords usually married persons from distant places (9), who generally were well-to-do (10). On the other

9. Anonymous. A note in different handwriting on page 109 of Zurita.

10. Muñoz Camargo, p. 78.

X 618 565 hand, and referring concretely to Tenochtitlan it is affirmed that the lords of the wards gave as many as twenty daughters to Acamapichtli so that he would have descendents by them, and that from Acamapichtli and the daughters of the lords, came the majority and the best heritages of this land (11). With all /p. 77/ this we can accept that at

11. Gómara, II, p. 273.

least in some cases, one of the lines of descent of the calpullis' lords —the maternal line—had the same heritage as the lords of Tenochtitlan. And it is even possible that in each case—remembering that in the ambilateral clan one always attempts to improve the lineage through both lines—preference would be given for the succession to clan chieftainship to sons born of the daughters of the calpulli chiefs and of the rulers of Tenochtitlan since the lords had as successors the sons of the principal women to whom they were married (12). It could perfectly well happen that the most noble woman to

12. Zurita, p. 74; Pomar, p. 25.

whom the chief of a calpulli was married, were the daughter of the marriage between some ruler of Mexico and some one of the daughters of the lords of the corresponding calpulli. We can say, nevertheless, that the chief of the calpulli did not necessarily have to be the direct and immediate descendent of the chiefs of Mexico since once having acquired his inheritance through one person, this person transmitted it automatically. We know moreover in this regard that the pipiltzin "which word means lords—are grandchildren and greatgrandchildren of the rulers" (13). It could well have been as a consequence that

13. Zurita, p. 91.

the chiefs of the calpulli had through one line, that of the father, the heritage of the predecessors of their own calpulli, and through the other, that of the mother, the heritage, perhaps distant, of the rulers of Mexico.

The ties of the lords of one calpulli with the lords of other calpullis, and especially with the rulers of the whole Tenochcan group

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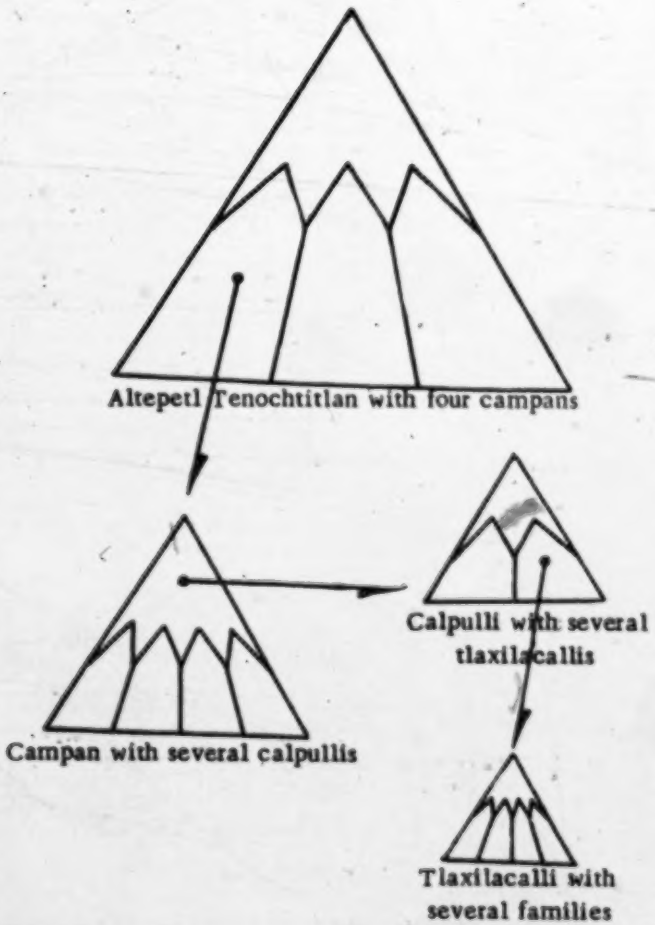
/p. 73/ SCHEMATIC PICTURE OF THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF TENOCHTITLAN


Altepetl Tenochtitlan with four campans
Calpulli with several tlaxilacallis
Campan with several calpullis
Tlaxilacalli with several families

The closeness of each person to his predecessors of clan, sub-clan, group of clans, or tribe is represented in the diagram by the closeness to the vertex of each pyramid. This closeness determined his rank. The diagram also shows the relative rank of each group of relatives as a whole according to their closeness to the vertex of the corresponding pyramid.

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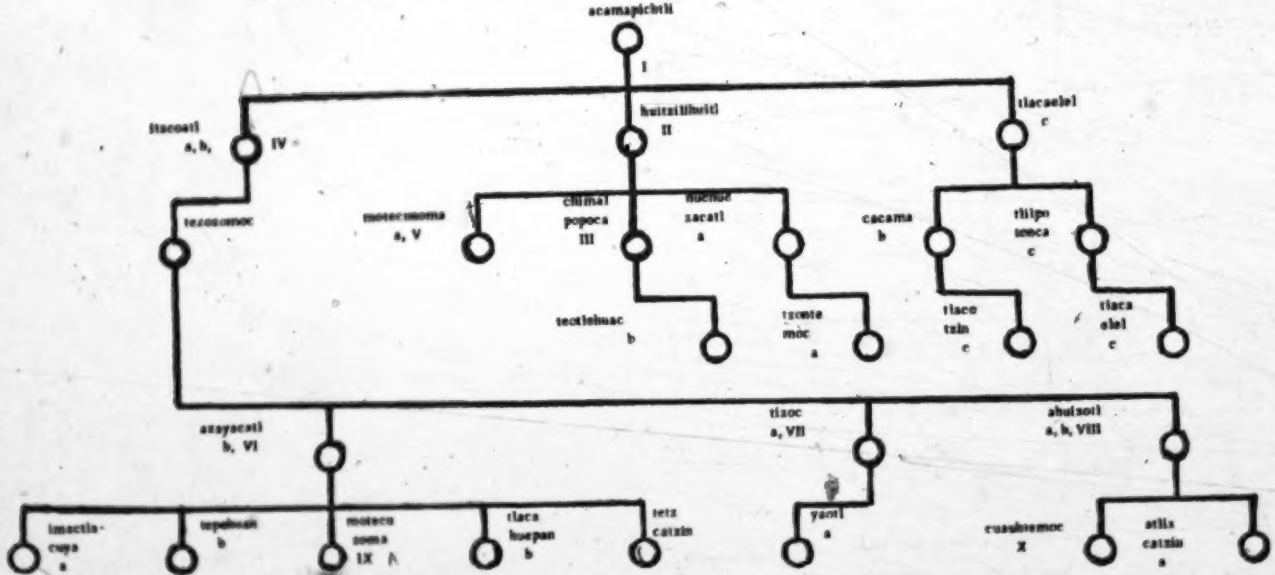
DIAGRAM OF THE KINSHIP OF THE TENOCHCAN RULERS

THE ROMAN NUMERALS INDICATE THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY WERE TOATOANIS OR SUPREME CHIEFS.
(a) INDICATES THEY WERE TLACATECATL
(b) INDICATES THEY WERE TLACOCHCALCATL
(c) INDICATES THEY WERE CHIUACOATL



1. THE DATA WERE TAKEN FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, PRINCIPALLY FROM THE CHART OF ADRIÁN F. LEÓN M. THE DIVERGENCES WITH OTHER SOURCES DO NOT INVALIDATE THE OBVIOUS CONCLUSION THAT THE PRINCIPAL TENOCHCAN RULERS WERE RELATIVES.

X 618 565 —who also had their calpulli as we have seen—obliges us to think of differences in rank between the calpullis themselves: a thing furthermore which we had already encountered on speaking of the division of labor by calpullis (see p. 49). We can obtain data to complement the above and see what the situation was in this respect. The most [663] noble clan would undoubtedly be the clan to which the rulers of the entire Tenochca group belonged, who were always related by marriage (see the Table of Tenochcan rulers), and of this still more noble would be the tlaxilacalli of the very tlatoani; and even more, the most noble family would be the tlatoani's own family.

We have seen that not all the calpullis had a calmecac ("place of the lineage of the house" and a school for nobles) but that there were only six. Acosta also confirms this for us (14). The meaning of this

14. Acosta, José de, p. 89.

is very clear: certainly these six calpullis were more noble than the other calpullis. One of them would be that one already cited as the most noble; but the five remaining would be others in a position surely inferior but which followed it in rank. The rest /p. 78/ of the clans would surely have an inferior position to these five clans, forming as a whole a true pyramid of clans of different categories, rank or nobility.

We are also told that each one of the four large "wards" had a chief, as did each one of the calpullis (15). As we have seen also

15. Torquemada, I, p. 294.

that the chiefs of each campan were related to the other members of their campan (see p. 32) we can suspect the existence of a calpulli more noble than the others in each campan—four in all—which very probably were the four which had a calmecac. What is more, the campan where the most noble calpulli of the whole Tenochcan group was, would surely be more noble than the other three. The Tecuhtlis possibly were the most noble members of Tenochtitlan of each campan, who were paid tribute by the members of the Tenochcan group, but were foreign to their clan, like the tlacatecatl, the tlacochcalcatl, the tlatoani, etc., whose functions were very different but were connected to the life of the whole of the Tenochcan community.

X618 565 A schema can be made in which appear: the stratification of the campan in all Tenochtitlan, the stratification of calpullis in each campan, the stratification of tlaxilacallis in each calpulli, and finally the most noble family within each tlaxilacalli. It is an essentially clan like organization, although unitary. The calpulli resembles a cell of Tenochtitlan but Tenochtitlan probably had only about twenty such cells. Neither the social division of labor, nor territorial division, nor the ownership of land, nor social stratification by themselves completely explain this situation. However, it appears relatively simple if we consider it as a clan organization based on the difference of rank derived from the proximity of each one of the members of the Tenochcan group—to his calpulli ancestor, to his campan ancestor and to the common ancestor of the whole Tenochcan group.

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Chapter 9

THE POSSIBILITY OF OTHER INTERPRETATIONS

X618 The fact that all the inhabitants of Tenochtitlan belonged to calpullis, that the calpullis evinced all the characteristics of ambilateral clans with endogamous tendencies and "pyramiding," and that the ownership of land, the social division of labor, territorial division and social stratification were determined by the existence of these clans indicates to us that the society which the Spanish found in Tenochtitlan was "still" a society based on kinship through common descent, but with many traits of an economic character. There were of course relationships rising out of economic production: commerce, slavery, etc.; and it is certain that the social organization of Tenochtitlan was so complex because of the necessities which arose as much from the internal organization of an agricultural community with techniques of horticulture, with fertilization, irrigation, etc., as from the organization of a veritable empire, such as the Tenochcans had, and which included possibly communities with an economy based on irrigation, terracing, etc. (1) such as happened on a large scale in the typical

1. Armillas, Pedro, 1947.

oriental societies of the old world. But in any case it appears that in Mexico the social organization still did not exceed the limits imposed by the existence of groups corresponding to one of the clan types.

X618 It appears, after all, that the doubts concerning whether the Tenochcas had clans or whether they had exogamous clans, derives solely from some investigator's limitation in their concept of clan, which did not include every organization based on kinship through common descent. It is useful, nevertheless, to make a few comments on the reasons which have been given in holding other positions.

X618 171 All the data which we have analyzed fit well within this scheme which I propose for the Tenochcan society, and, according to what I have found out, also the majority of data on this society which are not presented here fit into this scheme. I believe also that /p. 80/ many of the Meso-american groups (2) fit into a similar scheme,

2. Kirchhoff, P., 1943, p. 101E

even when many investigators tell us that there were "something like castes" among peoples like the Huaxtecs, Mixtecs, Zapotecs (3),

3. Radin, P., 1931, p. 1, 2.

and Tarascans (4), probably because all, and above all these latter,

4. Beals, R., 1932, p. 469, 470.

had endogamous marriages. It has also been said that among the Tenochcas there are traces of caste system, for the same reason (5).

5. Moreno, M., 1932.

It must be said that in reality it resembles it, through frequent endogamy. But various characteristics are lacking among the Tenochcas and certainly also in all these groups to characterize them as organized in castes: the calpullis (or the corresponding organisms with endogamous tendency in the other groups) must have been made up of a very small number of people, whereas castes appear to be true tribes subdivided in exogamous or endogamous clans (in various castes). Among the Tenochcas (and surely among the other tribes) the typical priest and warrior castes were lacking (which in Tenochtitlan belonged to different calpullis). Also in Tenochtitlan there was a certain freedom for individual development which does not exist in typical caste societies, and the social division of labor

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by calpullis was not very strict. Furthermore it must be said that the term "family" used by some investigators to refer to ambilateral groups, would better be left for groups of affinal and consanguineal relatives consolidated by marriage, and not for groups of people united by their kinship through common descent which is basic in clans. The Otomis also had groups resembling the calpullis (6) and their so-

6. Carrasco, Pedro, 1945, p. 86.

cial organization certainly was similar to that of the Tenochcas. With respect to the Mayas, Roys tells us that there were exogamous clans (7) and at the same time that there were social classes and that

7. Roys, R., 1945, p. 67.

the nobles reckoned their descent through both lines (8). Therefore

8. Roys, R., 1945, p. 33.

I think that, at least among the nobles, there were also groups of the ambilateral clan type.

All these groups fill geographically the gap left in Mesoamerica by Olson (9) and Beals (10) in their maps which include all the groups

9. Olson, R., 1933.

10. Beals, R., 1932.

about which it was possible to acertain that they had exogamous clans, all of which endorses the position maintained in this /p. 83/ work, as regards the Tenochcas, as well as regards these other groups which appear to be similar to them.

Another of the generally accepted arguments against the thesis that the inhabitants of Tenochtitlan had clans consists in the assertion that the latter had disappeared a long time before the arrival of the Spanish (11). But if we analyze the authority which they invoke

11. Hernández, Régulo, 1931, p. 60; and Freund, Georg, 1944.

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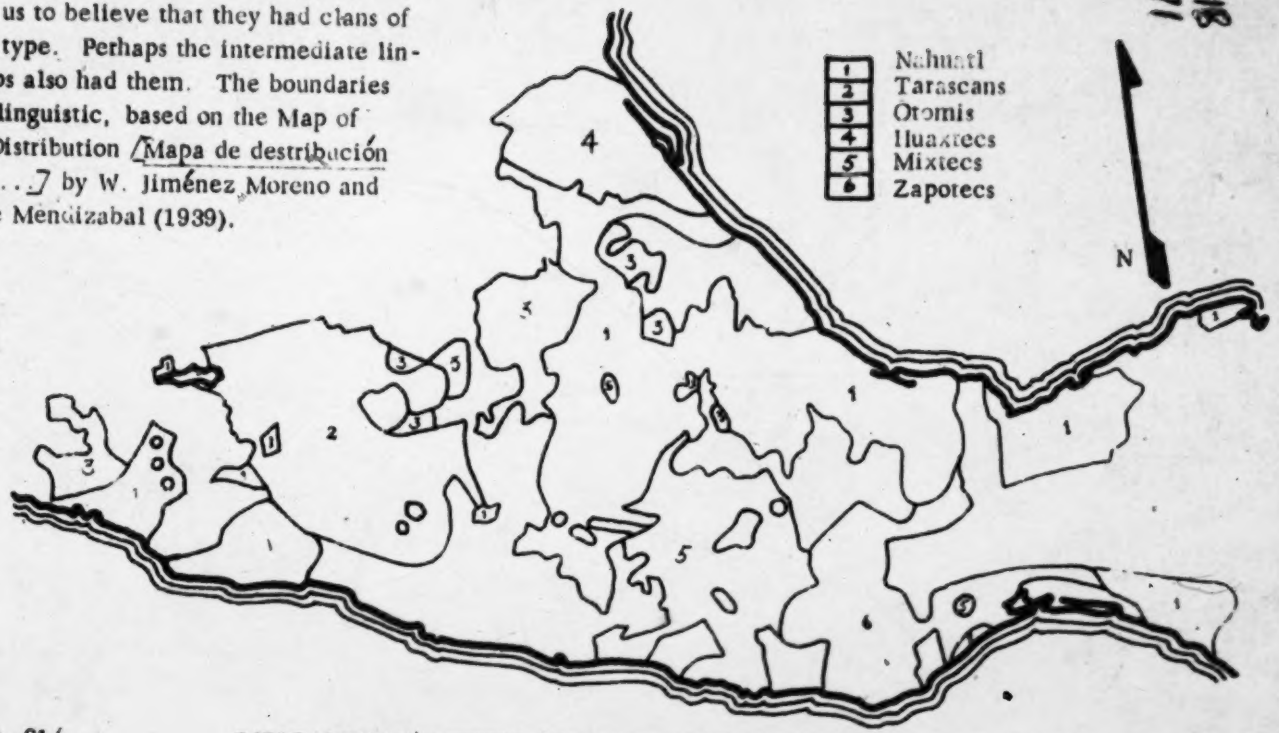
Concerning these tribes data is mentioned which leads us to believe that they had clans of the calpulli type. Perhaps the intermediate linguistic groups also had them. The boundaries marked are linguistic, based on the Map of Prehistoric Distribution [Mapa de destribución prehispánica...] by W. Jiménez Moreno and M. Othón de Mendizabal (1939).



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MESOAMERICAN TRIBES WHICH POSSIBLY HAD AMBILATERAL CLANS WITH ENDOGAMOUS TENDENCY

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X 618 171 in support of their argument, we find that in the first place it [the authority] does not speak of the Tenochcas and in the second place it does not give a basis for affirming the assumed disappearance of clans, even in the communities to which it refers. These authors base their assertion on a reference that Techotlalatzin, ruler of the Chichimecs, "divided the soil of all the land into parcels in a certain manner and each town, according to the number of people which it had had its population redistributed propotionately; so that if in a Tecpanec town there were six thousand inhabitants, he would take two thousand from there and pass them on to another Metzotec or Chichimec town and from that Metzotec town he would take two thousand inhabitants and move them to the Tecpanec town from which he had brought the others. And if the town had two thousand he would take a fifth and move them on to a another enemy nation and from there he would take the same number and pass them to this other place whence the former had been taken. And the Tecpanec ruler who was of that town whence were taken the two thousand inhabitants, although he did not have them in the same city, recognized them as his own in the other place where they were. And the Culhua, the Metzotec, and the Aculhua rulers did the same thing, so that although he had the same number of people under him, he did not have them all in the area of his rule, but mixed in with others" (12). This cannot

12. Torquemada, I, p. 89.

indicate that the clans had been broken up among the Tenochcas since in the first place the information refers to groups other than the Tenochcas (the Metzotecs, etc.) and only can explain to us or complement other indications; and cannot serve as a basis for assertions of this nature. But there is in addition another argument against the position which we criticize: we cannot say that the Metzotecs, Culhuas, etc., formed, each one, a clan which was then dismembered, it being far otherwise since if there were indeed clans there would be several [clans] in each one of these groups (several among the Metzotecs, several among the Culhuas, etc.). We can add that if what united a ruler with the transferred people was the bonds of kinship, then we are clearly told that they [the clans] were not broken. And finally it must be said that in later cases in which the transfer of people was resorted to, this was done taking into account the "parcel" ["parcialidad"] and "generation" of the transferred

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people, which probably meant, in general terms, /p. 84/ taking the clans into account. With these data we can find out nothing about the existence of clans, or of those communities, or of the Tenochcas.

It is frequently said that the calpullis were not clans—that is exogamous clans—but rather remains of exogamous clans (13). The

13. Kroeber, A.L., 1923, p. 357, 360; Moreno, M., 1931, p. 14-16; Radin, P., 1937, p. 102; etc.

only prop for this supposition is that the calpullis, being structures which presented some characteristics of the structures based on kinship through common descent, and these not being the same characteristics as those of exogamous clans, then they could not be clans, but rather their remains. I believe it would be extraordinary to find arguments in the sources for Mexican history to prove that the calpullis were remains of such clans. Even now we find many communities which evince characteristics which recall unilateral and exogamous structures (14). But these do not resemble what we know the

14. Pozas, Ricardo, 1945; Monzón, Arturo, 1945.

calpullis of Tenochtitlán were in the 16th Century, nor those of Tepoztlán in the 20th Century in spite of having suffered from the aftermath of the conquest a much more destructive influence than that which the calpullis would have suffered if it is that there were groups in Mesoamerica with a different and more advanced social structure prior to the period of the conquest. Only if there were no indications that the calpullis were ambilateral clans with endogamous tendencies could the possibility of their being remains of exogamous clans be countenanced.

The local restriction of the calpullis has been another argument against the existence of clans in the community which we are studying (15). But this cannot be of value, even as an argument that they

15. Kroeber, A.L., 1923, p. 357, 358, note.

were exogamous clans, since we have innumerable tribes including those with exogamous clans in which individuals of a determined sex

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are restricted as to locality, which only goes to indicate that their clan organization has influence in determining location. In the case of tribes such as the Maoris, with ambilateral clans, the local restriction applies to both sexes—as with the calpulli—and is certainly no reason for denying the importance of kinship through common descent in their social organization.

The division of labor by calpullis has also been presented as an argument against the thesis that the calpullis were clans (16). The

16. Kroeber, A.L., 1923.

reasoning to combat this position is simple: if the members of a calpulli evinced characteristics of members of a clan, it may be that these clan characteristics determined the social division of labor; but it is not /p. 85/ possible to accept that the social division of labor determined their characteristics of kinship through common descent. As in the case of local restriction, this would mean nothing more than that the clan organization also determined the organization of labor.

The existence of a strong social stratification (17) and of land

17. Kroeber, A.L., 1923; Moreno, M., 1931, p. 29 ff.

ownership (18) are not proofs either against the Tenochcas having

18. Toscano, S., 1946, p. 781.

had clans since we find in tribes the world over cases in which characteristics of ambilateral groups signal the existence of marked social strata such as happened among the Maoris (19) and the Incas (20).

19. Mishkin, B., 1937.

20. Kirchhoff, P., 1942 and 1948.

The argument for the existence of the social strata can be used very effectively against the idea that the Tenochcas had an exogamous clan organization, but it is not proof enough to deny that the bonds of kinship through common descent had great importance in the

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determination of social relationships, even as basic elements in the form of ambilateral clans with endogamous tendencies and stratified.

The absence of totemism has also been used against the idea that the Tenochcas had clans (21). This is no proof at all because, since

21. Moreno, M., 1931, p. 25.

there are exogamous clans without totemism, the calpullis could even have been exogamous clans (although they were not) without totemism being present.

The similarity between the Greek gens, the Egyptian nome, etc., and the calpulli has also been flourished as an argument against the thesis that there were clans among the Tenochcas (22). But the

22. Moreno, M., 1931, p. 8; Toscano, S., 1946, p. 784.

similarity between these structures would have to be proved, on the one hand, which has not been done; and it would have to be proved, on the other hand, that neither the gens nor the nome had their basis in kinship through common descent, which has not been done either. Moreover, if we take into account that the Greek gens has been considered by many authors as a clan and even that it possibly was an ambilateral clan, the similarity between the calpulli and the gens would reinforce the position that the calpulli was a clan.

Really no proofs have been brought against the very existence of the clans, the most widespread and cogent being the supposed possibility of proving that the social relations of the members of Central Mexican communities, among which was the Tenochcan, stemmed from territorial division, ownership of land, or production of /p. 86/ objects; elements which we have already seen were within the limits of the organization based on kinship through common descent. Also it has been said that the Tenochcan government had the character of a "state" (23). Against this we can only pose two assertions: one

23. Moreno, M., 1931, p. 33; Radin, P., 1937, p. 104.

is that there are sufficient proofs that among the Tenochcas the principal social relationships were based on phenomena of kinship through

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common descent; the other is that there are proofs that the social strata of the Tenochca community were not social classes, and that therefore their government could not have the character of a "state" if by this we mean that it had a class and non-"gentile" character.

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/p. 89/ Chapter 10

THE EVOLUTIONARY STAGE OF TENOCHCA SOCIETY

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Let us now see concisely what are the conclusions arrived at regarding the questions posed upon undertaking this investigation in accord with the theoretical possibilities at our disposal; and try to express the evolutionary stage of the Tenochcan society in accord with such conclusions.

Systemizing our data we can say that:

a) The Tenochcas had permanent structures—the calpullis—based on kinship through common descent of its members, that is, structures which possessed the necessary qualities for accepting that there were indications of clans among the Tenochcas.

b) We can also say that, taking into consideration the different forms which clans can assume, the information which we have regarding the Tenochcan clans present them to us as ambilateral clans with endogamous tendencies, among which, through having as a formative principal the reckoning of closeness of kinship to ancestors, there arose a marked internal differentiation, a veritable pyramid of ranks and of economic positions, the highest position being that of the calpulli chiefs.

c) We can say that there are many indications of there having been a differentiation in rank as between entire clans, the principal one being the one to which the chiefs of the whole Tenochcan group belonged.

d) We can say that there are also indications that the internal differentiation of the ranks of each clan is intimately bound to the differentiation between entire clans in the whole Tenochcan group through the realization of marriages between members of different clans.

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e) We can say, finally, that there are very numerous indications that the principal social relationships of the whole Tenochcan population were /p. 90/ determined by these ambilateral clan structure types which were greatly stratified and had endogamous tendencies. The more important of these relationships determined by the existence of clans were: 1st) Social stratification which was not independent from the clan organization although it had caused many investigators to think that they were real social classes or the beginnings of social classes. 2nd) The social division of labor, not only manual [labor], which had caused some authors to think that there were guilds among the Tenochcas. 3rd) The forms of land ownership, save two exceptions (the parcels of the valiant macehuales and those of the lords not subject to a determined entailed estate), which had caused it to be thought that the ownership of land was the base of the supposed classic type differences. 4th) The territorial division of the population.

Therefore we can affirm that there were clans among the Tenochcas around the time of the arrival of the Spanish; but that these clans were not of the nature of exogamous and equalitarian unilateral clans which have generally served as examples of clans, but were ambilateral clans with a great tendency towards exogamy and strongly stratified through having as their basic principal the reckoning of the closeness of kinship of their members to common ancestors.

Now then, what does all this mean from the point of view of the evolutionary stage of Tenochca society? There are several considerations that we can make in this respect: in the first place, that the Tenochcas were not in the same evolutionary stage as the Iroquois or other similar groups whose structure is equalitarian and democratic, but rather evinced a marked internal and external stratification and were markedly aristocratic. In the second place we can say that the Tenochcas were not in the same evolutionary line of exogamous clans whose structure does not permit of great development through internal evolution, but rather that the Tenochcas were in an evolutionary line of ambilateral clans which has always been susceptible to undergoing great changes. In the third place we can say that these changes —principally in the tributary system, but also in the clan system were in fact taking place in the society of the Tenochcas and that the more important of them were: a) the beginning of the separation of two hereditary strata—the pillis and the macehuales—of a graded [testamental] type; b) the beginning of the social division of labor by groups of a guild type, c) perhaps the beginning of territorial

X 618 178 division based on personal location—as appears to have occurred with the valiants who were not tributary, and with the owners of alienable land; and d) the beginning of /p. 91/ non-communal and non-alienable property, as was that of the nobles not subject to entailed estates. In the fourth place one must note that the beginning of the evolutionary changes permitted by the structure of Tenochca society formed basically by clans was really hardly a beginning, and that it still had not come to constitute a structure which could even be called graded [estamental] let alone a class type. One also has to note that the premises of productivity of work and of technical advance were not present among the Tenochcas, such as allowed in other parts of the world, the appearance of grades [estamentos] and of social classes, since among the Tenochcas a) there were no great irrigation works or intensive cultivation, although there was a quite advanced hoe cultivation with horticultural techniques (fertilization, selection, etc.); b) machines were absolutely unknown; d) [sic.:c), or c) omitted in printing] there were no domestic animals which might have permitted a great accumulation of wealth, etc. Furthermore there were no possibilities that these technical premises were to obtain in the near future, although they were indispensible for a subsequent evolution. It must also be said that Tenochca life had an economic base of cultivation, of artisan specialization, and of division of labor quite sufficient to allow and require a structure as complex as that which appears in the data, and that the economic relations were of a fundamental importance for the social life of the group; but there is no doubt that they had not come to have sufficient force to break with the limitations of an organization based on kinship through common descent.

Of course, to look at Tenochca society, as has been done in this study, isolated from the groups with which it sustained commercial relations and from those bound to it by tributary relations, achieving almost a parasitic life at their cost, is to see it very fragmentarily. The same can be said as to the lack of a complete study of the whole process of the evolution of Tenochcan society. But precisely because of having found that Tenochca society, in its dominant position, still had not changed its clan structure or even enjoyed an economic well-being that other contemporary groups did not enjoy, reinforces the idea for us that they had not reached a level of evolution similar to the high oriental type cultures of India, Egypt, or China. Furthermore we have to think that in the event that the Tenochca society had continued its evolution uninterrupted by the arrival of the Spanish, it

X, p. 178 would have arrived at an evolutionary stage precisely similar to such civilizations, not grounded in great works /p. 92/ of irrigation, but in cultivation by terracing, and by small scale irrigation.

The typical form of the appearance of social classes—that of Greece—is precisely the beginning of the break up of the hereditary limitations of social stratification into grades [estamentos]. In Mexico the falling apart of the clans and the hereditary stratification associated with them began only at the arrival of the Spanish and not through internal evolution but through imposition in a rough manner, and the new social organization spread in a regular and gradual way with the introduction of the new forms of production; the Spanish did not accelerate an internal process already initiated in Tenochca society, rather they introduced forms to which various of the their internal processes could be easily adapted.

/p. 93/ BIBLIOGRAPHY

18 /p. 95/ Following is a list of the works cited, in alphabetical order by author or, if the author is unknown and the work has a known title, then by title. The sources from which were taken data descriptive of the Tenochca society are marked by an (f) after the name of the author; the theoretical interpretations have no special mark.

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